
Douluo Dalu

V13 – The Fourth Spirit Ability

Tang Jia San Shao

085 – Fragrance Attracting Spirit Beasts

Part 1

"Dean Flender, I actually have a solution, however it is quite dangerous."

Tang San suddenly put forward, his voice drawing everyone's attention.

Flender grumpily said,

"Why didn't you say so earlier? What is it?"

Tang San said,

"Do you still remember the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure that I used two days ago to suppress the poisonous fog? As an immortal treasure herb, it can be considered to be one of nature's rarest gems. If I were to expose it to the surroundings, just its aura alone should attract the attention of powerful spirit beasts. However, as such, it would be impossible for me to guess what manner of beasts it could bring. It is quite possible that it could summon an exceedingly high quality spirit beast that we cannot hope to defeat, furthermore, the quantity it can summon will not be low either."

Hearing this, Flender realized it wasn't because Tang San purposely withheld a solution earlier, but because this solution was truly far too dangerous. In the worst case scenario, it was possible that they could face total annihilation.

Even though Flender, Zhao Wuji, and Liu Erlong were all rank 70 plus spirit masters, some especially powerful spirit beasts could easily destroy them.

Just like the Titan Giant Ape they encountered in the Star Dou Great Forest; a terrifying existence that even a Titled Douluo dare not

easily provoke.

"Xiao Gang, what do you think?"

Flender posed the question to Grandmaster

Grandmaster pondered for a moment and said,

"Little San's idea is not necessarily unusable; it all depends on how we approach it. Little San, can you still find the lair of Dugu Bo?"

Hearing Grandmaster's question, Tang San's eyes immediately lit up, his inner thought progression closely mirrored Grandmaster's so even though Grandmaster had not revealed his idea, he already understood.

"Master, you mean to use the venom left behind by the Old Freak to protect us?"

Grandmaster smiled faintly and nodded. Right now everyone else were still baffled, not understanding what this pair of master and disciple were talking about.

Tang San at Grandmaster's indication explained that because this Sunset Forest housed Poison Douluo Dugu Bo's private hideout, the perimeter near the location of the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well was protected by Dugu Bo's poisonous formation.

That poison formation came from Dugu Bo's horrifyingly potent venom abilities.

Even a ten thousand year spirit beast wouldn't dare take a step past the boundary.

Of course, such a poison posed no challenge to Tang San. Even if Dugu Bo had not already given them the antidote, he could still easily produce an antidote himself or rely on the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure to suppress the poison.

By exposing the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure outside of the poison formation, they could attract many spirits beasts and should at any time the beasts become too powerful, they could retreat back into the protection of the poison and no longer fear

being overwhelmed.

When they wanted to leave, they could simply exit the Sunset Forest in a different direction.

Now that they had a method, everyone immediately set out for the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well under Tang San's directions.

The Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well was located in the center of the Sunset Forest, equidistant to the edges of the forest, and since the Shrek Academy group had already been inside the Sunset Forest for some time, it took them less than half a day to reach the outside perimeters Dugu Bo's poison formation.

Tang San with a serious expression passed out two pills to each person,

"The poison the old freak used for protection here is extremely insidious, although it will affect spirit masters to a lesser degree compared to spirit beasts, if your spirit energy is less than 70 ranks, a single step inside the protected ground and your death will be assured. First take one of the pills, it will ensure your safety for a day, tomorrow at the same time take the second pill. I believe two days should provide us ample time."

Finished saying this, Tang San began the preparations. He first entered the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well alone and retrieved some of the fertile mud from the banks where the two sides of the well flowed together. After that he returned and dug out a hole outside of the poison formation and placed the mud within before carefully planting the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure on top.

The Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure was different from Xiao Wu's Yearning Heartbroken Red that would never wilt. Once it had left the Wishful Hundred Treasure Purse, if it didn't receive enough nature's spiritual nourishment, it will slowly wilt.

Thankfully, the soil from the side of the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well had sufficient energy to nourish it; otherwise Tang San would never let it touch regular soil.

Having completed the temporary planting of the Aromatic Silk Beauty

Immortal Treasure, Tang San took out a small jade bottle from the Wishful Hundred Treasure Purse. As he removed the stopper from the bottle, a thick cloud of briny stench wallowed out, immediately filling the air. Even the fragrance of the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure couldn't suppress its terrible smell.

"Little San, what is that thing? The smell is killing me"

Dai Mubai who always loved cleanliness, immediately dodged far away when he smelled it.

Tang San smiled slightly, and thought to himself, 'Boss Dai, how can you possibly know that this liquid with its unbearable stench was synthesized by me using more than ten kinds of precious ingredients. Its rarity is almost comparable to that of the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure.'

He very carefully tilted the bottle above the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, allowing a single drop of black liquid to fall onto its stamen. Tang San then carefully resealed the jade bottle and returned it into his Hundred Treasure Purse.

An extraordinary scene unfolded. The Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure's stamen began emitting a dense purple gas, its originally gentle fragrance immediately growing more powerful. The smell of the flower was no longer limited to within its area of effect, instead started to quickly permeate the surrounding air and beyond.

Even Dai Mubai who had evacuated the area previously to escape the stench could feel perfumed air tickling his nose.

Tang San explained to his group,

"The medicine I used on the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure will nourish it, causing it to temporarily lose its poison suppression effect for about two hours, however, within this time its scent will rapidly spread to a minimum of ten li^[1]. This should be more than enough to attract some spirit beasts. After all, the scent belongs to one of the exceedingly rare heavenly treasures; there should be no beasts that wouldn't like it."

The rest of the group couldn't help but be amazed at Tang San's application of medicine. Of course they all attributed this to the half year Tang San spent studying under Dugu Bo.

Nourishing the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure and attracting spirit beasts, for Tang San, this could be considered two birds with one stone. As the gentle scent slowly saturated the air, the Shrek Academy party also became increasingly alert.

The three with the weakest fighting power, Oscar, Ning Rongrong and Grandmaster were positioned closest to the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, the rest are around them, carefully observing in all directions.

Having finished preparing the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, Tang San did not immediately join his friends in surveying the surroundings but rather walked around the flower a distance away. The scent produced by the divine flora held great attraction to all spirit beasts regardless of their cultivation level.

In order to prevent the spirit beast with too low of a cultivate level to disturb them and disrupt their planning, Tang San prepared his own layer of protection via poison.

His poison formation clearly wasn't as severe as the one created by Dugu Bo, but it should be effective in filtering the spirit beasts. According to Tang San's calculations, spirit beasts that had less than two thousand years of cultivation should not be able to easily enter.

Spirit beasts were different from humans; their senses were much sharper. Especially towards dangers such as poison, their judgement was rarely wrong.

Once they discovered that the poison was not something they could resist, they would never risk their lives.

With the assistance of this poison protected ground, the Shrek Academy's group of people could save a lot of energy. They only need to choose targets among the sufficiently cultivated spirit beasts.

The stage had been set, all that was left was to tighten their

formation and wait. Even though this hunting method could easily attract more powerful spirit beasts, it was equally dangerous. Whether the spirit beasts that came were too powerful or too weak, neither would satisfy Tang San and the others' requirements. As a result, no matter how you put it, luck held a certain part.

The lure of the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure's effect was even bigger than Tang San had expected. Once they have finished setting up, less than a cup of tea's time had passed before the first spirit beast appeared.

A low rumbling roar and a faint stench reached them, the trees to their left started to sway, as if brushed by a gale.

"Cloud follows the dragon and wind follows the tiger. It should be a spirit beast of the tiger family. Everyone be careful."

Grandmaster calmly deduced.

Just as Grandmaster finished speaking, a gorgeous yet ferocious tiger burst through the thickets.

The tiger was covered from head to toe in murky black fur; the only exception being the "king" character^[2] on its forehead patterned in white. The length of its body was over three meters long and stood at one meter fifty shoulder height. Although it was quite large, it was nevertheless very nimble.

Even before anyone had a clear look at the beast, it already pounced towards them. Its movement like a trail of shadows and its aim was precisely the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure being protected behind everyone.

"Begin combat!"

Tang San roared, and without withholding any spirit power raised his arm, releasing a Spider Web Restraint. Due to his spirit power increase, his limit had now increased to four Spider Web Restraints.

Spirit beasts from their outer appearance can be seen that generally those with cultivation less than ten thousand years would increase in size the more they cultivate, but those that have surpassed ten

thousand years instead will start decreasing in the size the more powerful they grow.

Of course, there are some exceptions, but other than spirit beasts that are especially powerful or weak most do follow this development path. The black tiger before them could easily be identified as one that has cultivated between three thousand to five thousand years, perfectly suitable.

Tang San without hesitation chose to fight rather than flee.

The green light expanded in a flash. Sometimes having too fast of a speed is not always good; such as the case for this spirit beast Phantom Tiger^[3] that only has the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure in its eyes.

The Phantom Tiger's horrific speed and combat prowess was well known, it can be considered to be among the strongest spirit beasts. It was also incredibly aggressive and will not hesitate to fight anyone that dares intrude in its territory to the death.

Because its speed was incomparable, even other spirit beasts that had achieved similar years of cultivation, ordinarily would not seek to fight it.

Part 2

Seeing Tang San unleash Spider Web Restraint at the Phantom Tiger, its body flickered strangely, and the originally one Phantom Tiger suddenly turned into three.

The one in the Spider Web Restraint faded away unseen like a mirage, while the other two advanced even faster.

Phantom Tiger's innate ability, Shadow Doppelgänger.

Dai Mubai roared deeply, four spirit rings simultaneously flashing up from below. When the Phantom Tiger appeared, his body already swiftly swelled up, and now watching the Phantom Tiger dash forward he went head to head with it without the slightest hesitation.

A pair of tiger paws slapped forward, and from his mouth a white light jetted out, already releasing White Tiger Light Wave.

Spirit power rising substantially increased the might of spirit abilities, and Dai Mubai's goal was also only to block the Phantom Tiger's charge.

In the flash of white light, another Phantom Tiger disappeared. Without a doubt, Dai Mubai's target had also been a shadow.

Ma Hongjun and Xiao Wu went up simultaneously, preparing a cooperative attack on the Phantom Tiger's true body. It's enormous body flashed with black light, once again separating two silhouettes. By now it was already in front of everyone, the three forms simultaneously charging at the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure from different angles. With the previous lesson in mind, right now nobody actually knew which form was after all the real Phantom Tiger.

At this moment, purple golden light flashed out of Tang San's eyes, his gaze sweeping, already shouting,

"The left one is real. Careful, Zhuqing."

Under the gaze of Purple Demon Eye there was nowhere for the Phantom Tiger to hide. Even though Tang San's eyes still couldn't be called 'piercing eyes', after reaching the mustard seed stage, his eyes could even distinguish energy attribute differences, and could naturally differentiate the the aura fluctuations around the three Phantom Tigers.

Right now, the only one confronting the real body was Zhu Zhuqing, and behind her back were Ning Rongrong and Oscar. This Phantom Tiger was undoubtedly clever, choosing the weakest direction to attack from.

Flender, Liu Erlong and Zhao Wuji were all already waiting for action with their strength stored up. If the Shrek Seven Devils were unable to withstand the attack of this Phantom Tiger, they would act immediately.

The Shrek Seven Devils had cooperated for so long that the tacit

understanding between them had long ago already reached a certain boundary. Seeing Zhu Zhuqing in danger, the gold purple light in Tang San's eyes suddenly intensified, everyone seeing a glaring light flash past.

That Phantom Tiger hissed sharply, and its forward momentum immediately slowed down somewhat, and even the other two disappeared like smoke.

Zhu Zhuqing very clearly understood that there was no space to dodge behind her, and advanced rather than retreating, going up to meet the Phantom Tiger's charge. It was also now that three streams of warmth entered her body from behind, strength, agility as well as spirit power simultaneously upgrading substantially, immediately letting her condition surpass her peak.

Hell Rush Stab unleashed, Zhu Zhuqing's delicate body directly struck the Phantom Tiger, the keen blades at her fingertips ruthlessly flitting across the Phantom Tiger's throat, leaving behind several deep cuts.

The pain woke up the Phantom Tiger from Tang San's mental attack, and with a fierce roar, black light rushed out from its whole body and it distorted, inconceivably shifting sideways, just dodging away from Zhu Zhuqing's followup Hell Hundred Claws.

However, this brief moment's obstruction was already enough. Dai Mubai's tall figure already charged over from the side. The tiger stripes all over his overbearing form had all turned golden, and snarling, golden light burst out. With his body as the center, countless fist sized golden spheres of light locked on to the Phantom Tiger, flocking towards it. It was precisely the fourth spirit ability Dai Mubai obtained not long ago, White Tiger Meteor Shower.

In terms of burst attack power, perhaps this fourth spirit ability of Dai Mubai's couldn't compare to Fatty's Phoenix Cry Sky Strike, but its greatest feature was that it could lock in on the opponent. Once the target was locked in, all the White Tiger Meteors formed from spirit power would launch as a concentrated volley.

The entire attack power could be concentrated on one opponent,

and they could also disperse to attack multiple opponents.

The attack power contained by each ball was equal to one tenth of Dai Mubai's spirit power, which showed how powerful growth potential this spirit ring gave him. He could launch more than a hundred meteors.

If the Phantom Tiger hadn't suffered Tang San's mental attack it could still have used its Doppelgänger ability to as much as possible of Dai Mubai's attack, but right now its mind was injured by Purple Demon Eye, and it was temporarily unable to fully use Doppelgänger. Helplessly, it could only stiffly resist Dai Mubai's attack with its own body.

Black light flashed out and transformed into a black light cover that enveloped the Phantom Tiger. Each White Tiger Meteor that bombarded it would erupt in a loud explosion, and concentrated booms echoed continuously, ring after ring of golden ripples erupting on that black light.

The Phantom Tiger curled up its body as much as possible, making the area suffering the attack smaller in order to increase its defense.

The Shrek Seven Devils' cooperation was so implicit, Ning Rongrong's hand supported the Nine Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda, already releasing her three spirit abilities on the five people in charge of attacking.

Besides strength and speed amplification, her third spirit ability, also a thousand year spirit ability, directly amplified spirit power. In other words, currently the effective spirit power of Tang San and the others was one hundred forty percent that of normal.

The Seven Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda's effect as the first support spirit had become more and more clear as Ning Rongrong's strength grew.

Of course, as a result of the spirit ability effects increasing, the consumption of Ning Rongrong's own spirit power was no doubt immense. Amplifying three aspects simultaneously, even though she already possessed fortieth ranked spirit power, she could at most

persevere for ten minutes.

Intense explosions made the soil turn, the Phantom Tiger was like an angry wolf in a small boat, constantly rocked by the shocks. But it was indeed powerful, under this kind of attack it actually still didn't collapse.

When the White Tiger Meteor Shower finally ended, the instant all the explosions finished, suddenly the Phantom Tiger's curled up body instantly unfolded. Immediately followed by an immense flash of black light and shadow bursting from within its body, going straight for Zhu Zhuqing.

That black light and shadow suddenly condensed in midair into an identical form as the Phantom Tiger, with even the same size. Terrifying energy fluctuations made the air issue ear-piercing sharp hisses, as if cut open by that black light.

The five Shrek Seven Devils in charge of attack now surrounded the Phantom Tiger, but its movements were really too fast, and nobody had expected that after just now having endured the White Tiger Meteor Shower bombardment and with blood flowing from its nose and mouth, it could still so quickly issue an all out attack.

There wasn't even enough time for Tang San to release Blue Silver Grass to save Zhu Zhuqing.

A more than three thousand year spirit beast's all out attack was terrifying, the Phantom Tiger's attack capability couldn't be any less than the Pink Queen. The reason it chose to attack Zhu Zhuqing was because behind her was the closest way to the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure.

As long as it could break out from this situation, it could not only grab the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, but also turn and escape.

Unfortunately, this Phantom Tiger still underestimated Zhu Zhuqing's strength and resolve.

Confronting this black light and shadow attack, Zhu Zhuqing didn't dodge or escape, her third spirit ring flashed with purple light, both

hands like lightning folding over her head, the claw blades of the five fingers on each hand fusing together with astonishing speed, becoming a one chi^[4] long sharp blade.

Black light also rushed out from within Zhu Zhuqing, and her whole body seemed to become a part of that sharp blade, swinging both hands down to meet the black light released from the Phantom Tiger.

This was the thousand year spirit ring ability Zhu Zhuqing obtained after reaching the thirtieth rank —— Hell Decapitation.

Equally ear piercing tearing noises resounded, on both sides of the Hell Decapitation, the air distorted like rippling water, clearly splitting open.

The black light blade only condensed in a straight line, and just as it struck down it heavily bombarded that Phantom Tiger's transformed shadow.

With the assistance of Ning Rongrong's Nine Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda, this attack could be said to be Zhu Zhuqing's most powerful attack at present.

There was no noise of a collision, only a teeth ache inducing grinding sound.

In midair, the Phanttom Tiger shadow paused before that sharp Hell Decapitation attack, and the instant the Hell Decapitation struck it was cut in half.

But, this was after all only the third spirit ability, while this shadow attack could be said to be the Phantom Tiger's all out attack. Its body already came charging closely behind.

The might of the Hell Decapitation was in the end still by far counteracted by the Phantom Tiger' far superior energy.

Perhaps it was because it was stopped, after that black shadow halted, it immediately used even higher speed to strike at Zhu Zhuqing.

And this moment was just after Zhu Zhuqing had just released her full strength attack, the dangerous juncture when new strength had not yet been born.

A massive silhouette just like a shield moved across in front of Zhu Zhuqing, and without any fanfare struck out head on with a white furred tiger palm.

With a loud bang, that massive silhouette swayed once, but still didn't agree to retreat a single step. It was precisely the Evil Eye White Tiger Dai Mubai.

Even though Zhu Zhuqing's Hell Decapitation couldn't completely cut open the Phantom Tiger's attack, it could still fight for time. The instant he discovered the danger Dai Mubai had rushed over, just in time to shield Zhu Zhuqing.

Using his tyrannical spirit power to shield her from the remaining attack.

In spite of wisps of blood flowing from the corners of his mouth, Dai Mubai immediately revealed his overbearing side. Faced with the Phantom Tiger's charge, condensing spirit power he released White Tiger Body Barrier, stiffly blocking the Phantom Tiger's charge.

Part 3

White Tiger collided with Phantom Tiger, a muffled grunt and a sharp hiss echoed practically simultaneously. Dai Mubai staggered back before turning, but that Phantom Tiger was also sent flying by him.

A slender figure quietly appeared behind the Phantom Tiger, a pair of slender perfectly straight thighs quietly winding around its neck, Waist Bow launching, Xiao Wu completed a graceful backwards summersault in the air, and under the powerful strength of her Waist Bow the Phantom Tiger's more than three meters long body was thrown directly into the air, and slammed back down heavily on the ground.

There was an intense boom.

In the blink of an eye, the Phantom Tiger was stunned.

A flicker of red light, Ma Hongjun's plump body already since long ago waited where the Phantom Tiger fell, and the instant Xiao Wu's long legs released it, his right fist also accurately struck the ground. He and the Phantom Tiger were completely enveloped within distorted air.

A resonant phoenix cry once again echoed in the Sunset Forest, and along with an immense bird of flame soaring up, and the large Phantom Tiger no longer even whimpered.

From Zhu Zhuqing halting the Phantom Tiger with Hell Decapitation, to Dai Mubai tyrannically blocking it from the front and sending it flying, Xiao Wu's midair Soft Skill linking up to Ma Hongjun's right hand restricting it with Phoenix Cry Sky Strike, all of this flowed as smoothly as running water and moving clouds.

Hong——

The Phantom Tiger's body covered in flames fell heavily on the ground. Even if it wanted to crawl it wouldn't be able to succeed.

The red hot phoenix flames were constantly eroding its body. Successively enduring Dai Mubai's White Tiger Meteor Shower and Ma Hongjun's Phoenix Cry Sky Strike, even though this Phantom Tiger was any number of times stronger than the Pink Queen, in the end it still suffered life threatening injuries.

"Zhuqing, do it."

Tang San's calm voice promptly echoed.

Zhu Zhuqing moved around Dai Mubai, transforming into a series of incomplete shadows, and the instant the Phantom Tiger drew its last breath she relied on her Hell Rush Stab to make the last attack, her right hand claws thrusting into the Phantom Tiger's left eye to reach its brain, ending its life.

Ma Hongjun opened his mouth wide and inhaled, withdrawing the phoenix flames on the Phantom Tiger and polluting Zhu Zhuqing's arm, putting a satisfactory period to this time's perfect kill scene.

But at this moment, Grandmaster's somewhat impatient voice suddenly reached them,

"Little San, quickly take back your Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure."

Now that the Shrek Seven Devils paid attention, on their side they had dealt with the Phantom Tiger, but on the other side, Zhao Wuji, Flender and Liu Erlong were all already fighting.

They didn't know when, but during the fight seven wildly different spirit beasts had appeared, in the process of besieging Flender's trio. If it wasn't for the trio's immense strength, if even one slipped by them it wouldn't have been easy for the Shrek Seven Devils to handle.

Originally, when the Phantom Tiger appeared and drew the attacks of the Shrek Seven Devils, one after another seven spirit beasts arrived. Tang San's seven could cope with one five thousand or so years spirit beasts, but if there was another, they might take casualties. Flender, Liu Erlong and Zhao Wuji immediately went to meet them, helping them block the attacks of later spirit beasts.

After this the amount of spirit beasts grew greater and greater, one more powerful than the other. If it went on like this, perhaps even they would be unable to resist.

Therefore Grandmaster had Tang San quickly take away the target of these spirit beasts.

With just a glance, Tang San already had a grasp of the battle circumstances, and without the slightest hesitation said to Dai Mubai:

"Mubai, you bring the Phantom Tiger's corpse and Zhuqing into the poison formation first, let her absorb the spirit ring. The rest of you follow me."

Dai Mubai looked distracted a moment, but only hesitated slightly. He naturally had confidence in Tang San and only smiled wryly inside. Zhu Zhuqing's character wasn't too good to begin with, and when further absorbing this tiger type spirit, how couldn't she become even more like a tigress? However her spirit was also a cat

type, and this Phantom Tiger excelled at speed, seemingly it was also suitable.

Along with Dai Mubai and Zhu Zhuqing first stepping into the poison formation, Tang San took the variety of sausages Oscar handed over. After each of them first ate a recovery sausage, they immediately gathered towards Flender's trio.

Strength. This was strength!

Watching Flender's trio fighting, the Shrek Seven Devils couldn't keep from inwardly sighing in admiration.

Flender, Liu Erlong and Zhao Wuji were all three Spirit Sage powers over seventieth rank. Right now the three weren't coordinating at all, only fighting their own battles, but withstood the attacks of those seven spirit beasts without allowing them to take one step past the line.

The reason they didn't cooperate wasn't because they didn't want to, but rather because they couldn't. The might of the trio's spirit abilities was too great, and if they cooperated with each other they would instead cause disturbances, making them unable to bring out their full strength.

At such a time, Ning Rongrong showed the effect of the Nine Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda spirit she had inherited.

When the Phantom Tiger was defeated, she had already stopped assisting Tang San and the others. Right now the Nine Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda's three rings of light flashed once again, becoming three lines of light that simultaneously poured into Flender's trio.

The more powerful the Spirit Master the greater effect the Seven Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda's support would have, this was something all the Shrek Seven Devils knew. Because its support increased by a percentage, the higher the base value the more powerful the upgrade effect. But when truly used in combat, that reversing heaven and earth terrifying effect still shocked Tang San and the others.

The light around Flender's trio simultaneously rose sharply, and the seven spirit beasts that had previously been constantly attacking them were forced to retreat practically simultaneously.

Unfortunately, Ning Rongrong's support could also only continue for a few short breaths. This was still the first time she supported Spirit Masters with so much higher spirit power than her own.

The feeling was as different as black and white compared to supporting the Shrek Seven Devils, in just a few seconds she could feel her spirit power draining away, her whole body unspeakably unwell.

"Retreat into the poison formation."

Flender shouted. He had no choice but to make this decision, because he saw more than ten spirit beasts more rushing out from the forest, their target on their side.

The Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure's fragrance was dense and lasted long without scattering, even though right now it had already been withdrawn by Tang San into the Hundred Treasure Purse, the scent was still there. The later arriving spirit beasts unexpectedly had a lot that were over the ten thousand year level, this wasn't something Flender and the others could hold back.

The Shrek Seven Devils and Grandmaster swiftly retreated into the poison formation Dugu Bo had set up. Although Flender's trio had lost Ning Rongrong's support, with their strength, even if they couldn't win, they could still run.

Perhaps it was because the poison formation had been here for so long, but just as Tang San expected, when the approximately twenty spirit beasts reached its edge they immediately stopped, and could only make some long range attacks.

Unfortunately their range was limited, and Flender and the others blocked them a few times as the Shrek Academy party already moved within the poison formation where they couldn't reach.

"Little San, that Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure of yours really is too effective."

Flender looked with some trepidation at the still increasing number of spirit beasts outside. Who said Sunset Forest didn't have formidable spirit beasts? Among the twenty nine spirit beasts already gathered outside, there were at least six or seven whose strength exceeded ten thousand years, even so much that one spirit beast's cultivation approached thirty thousand years. The other spirit beasts were also all over three thousand years.

Even the impulsive Liu Erlong understood that such high level spirit beasts wasn't something they could match, and could only avoid.

Grandmaster's gaze turned to the side where Zhu Zhuqing was already absorbing the spirit ring, and happily said:

"At least we didn't waste our strength. That Phantom Tiger is quite good, whether in ability or attributes, they're both very suitable for Zhuqing."

Tang San was now constantly observing the spirit beasts outside. Due to the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure's scent still not scattering, right now the spirit beasts were still pacing outside the poison formation, while absorbing the scent left in the air they glared like tigers watching prey at their side.

At least until the fragrance scattered they clearly wouldn't leave.

Tang San raised the sleeve on his right arm and swiftly removed the Flying God Claw and handed it to Flender to the side.

Flender puzzled said:

"What is it?"

Tang San said:

"Dean, there are so many spirit beasts outside, and there are a few that suits us. They don't dare enter the poison formation, so we need to pull them inside to hunt them. With your, teacher Zhao and teacher Erlong's strength, pulling them inside shouldn't be any problem."

Flender astonished said:

“Little San, you’re joking. Can’t you see how many spirit beasts are outside? As soon as we go out, we’ll definitely be mobbed. Even we couldn’t retreat intact. There really are too many spirit beasts outside, the instant burst power they could produce would give a headache even to Title Douluo.”

Tang San smiled slightly, always planning in advance pointed to the Flying God Claw in his hand, saying:

“That’s why I’m giving you this. With it you basically don’t need to go outside. Mubai, little Ao, give your Flying God Claws for teacher Zhao and teacher Erlong to use.”

Listening to Tang San, Flender was immediately greatly curious,

“Well, so you kids still had another move.”

Even though he still didn’t understand what Tang San wanted them to do, he could see from Tang San’s expression that he held considerable certainty.

From the suggestion of setting up by the poison formation, he clearly had already planned ahead, one plan after another, his mind was even more meticulous than the majority of adults.

Could it be that Clear Sky Douluo’s genes were this good?

Tang San helped the curious trio set up the Flying God Claws on their right arms, then gave them a detailed explanation in its use.

Notes

1. 5km
2. (wang 王)
3. (鬼虎) “Ghost/Crafty Tiger”
4. 1 尺 = $\frac{1}{3}$ m

086 – Thousand Year Unicorn Armored Beast And Ten Thousand Year Demon Spider

Part 1

With their curiosity greatly increased, the trio immediately tried using it within the poison formation, unable to keep from gasping in admiration over the elaborate Flying God Claw. Especially the quality of the material and craftsmanship made them adore it even more.

Now Flender didn't need to worry about dealing with the spirit beasts outside, a cunning light flashed in his eyes, with his particular lisping voice saying to Tang San:

"I say little San, how about we strike a deal?"

Tang San was astute, his face immediately showing a smiling expression:

"No problem, besides this Flying God Claw, anything else is fine."

"Eh....."

Flender immediately choked on his next words.

To the side Liu Erlong looked disdainfully at Flender,

"And you call yourself a teacher, you actually want the childrens' things. Little San, how about this, teacher Erlong will trade with you. Later you pick any spirit beast outside and tell me, I'll catch it for you, and afterward you make me a Flying God Claw."

As a result of Liu Erlong's figure being different from a man's and being more observant than Flender, she discovered that each Flying God Claw was different, immediately understanding that this thing was made to size.

Flender didn't give up, and without waiting for Tang San to speak up he couldn't keep from saying:

"What you can catch, don't tell me I can't? Little San, I'll also pre order. I'm also your Teacher's old brother, so give me this piece."

Looking at Flender, then again at Liu Erlong, Tang San laughed inwardly.

Actually, it was no wonder that Flender and Liu Erlong were so interested in this Flying God Claw. This thing was extremely practical, and what's more, in a key moment it could be a life saver. The quality was superb, extremely durable, when worn on the arm it didn't feel cumbersome, no more than a wrist protector. That weight was basically no problem to them.

Helplessly, Tang San could only say:

"Fine. However, making this thing takes a lot of time. Once this time's Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament is over I'll make one for each teacher."

Flender laughed out loud,

"Fine, then teacher will be impolite. Erlong, Wuji, we'll do it. Little San, just pick any one of these spirit beasts outside. We'll catch it for you."

Grandmaster to the side looked at Flender's appearance of accomplishing lowly ambitions and helplessly shook his head, but also didn't say anything.

Tang San said:

"Help Rongrong catch one first. I'm in no hurry, I'll still observe a bit."

Flender nodded, saying:

"That's also fine. Grandmaster, do you see something relatively good for Rongrong's fourth spirit ring?"

Tang San was Grandmaster's disciple, and Flender could naturally ask him directly for his opinion, but the others still followed

Grandmaster's opinion on the most suitable.

Grandmaster's gaze swept across those spirit beasts glaring like tigers outside, and raising his hand he pointed to one among them,

"Rongrong's previous three abilities separately increase speed, strength and spirit power. Then, mainly this fourth spirit ability should increase defense. That four thousand year or so Unicorn Armored Beast^[1] is comparatively suitable."

Everyone turned to look in the direction Grandmaster indicated, seeing a spirit beast shaped like a crocodile. Its bulk wasn't especially large, five meters long or so, a head with four eyes, four limbs as thick and solid as buckets. Its most outstanding feature was that its whole body was covered in black plate armor. Each armor plate was roughly palm sized, appearing extremely thick and durable.

Grandmaster lowered his voice:

"The Unicorn Armored Beast is mainly specialized in close combat, it has enormous strength, and relying on its astonishing defense it can practically ignore most attacks from spirit beasts of similar cultivation age. You three had best work together to secure it."

Grandmaster's words were naturally convincing, and Flender's trio's gazes simultaneously locked on that Unicorn Armored Beast. Stepping forward, in the blink the distance had closed to within thirty meters, Flying God Claws simultaneously shooting out, steel claws spreading in the air, in practically an instant that thousand year Unicorn Armored Beast had been accurately grabbed.

Flender and the others only felt a slight jolt at their wrists as the action completed. The tactile quality of the Flying God Claws was extremely good, just like a real hand spreading open.

But, as the maker of the Flying God Claws, the pupils of Tang San's eyes contracted. Because, the three Flying God Claws that landed on the Unicorn Armored Beast unexpectedly couldn't pierce through its armor. Despite each grabbing an armor plate, they were unable to penetrate the slightest bit. In fact, with the Flying God Claw's own

mechanical strength and sharpness, even metal or rock could be easily pierced. From this could be seen just how abnormal the defense of this thousand year Unicorn Armored Beast was. No wonder it would mix in with ten thousand year spirit beasts, who would have the least bit interest in bones so difficult to gnaw.

Without waiting for the Unicorn Armored Beast to struggle, Flender's trio exhaled simultaneously, spirit power condensing in a flash and releasing.

Even though that Unicorn Armored Beast was astonishingly strong, controlling the Flying God Claws on its body were three Spirit Sage level powers with more than seventieth ranked spirit power. How could their instantly erupting power be resisted by a thousand year spirit beast?

The five meter long body was thrown directly into the air, flipping in their direction.

Grandmaster's voice echoed at this opportune moment,

"Its weakness is inside its mouth. Only from there can the inside of its body be injured. The armor plates on other parts of its body are half as thick as its body. Its defense is even more abnormal than some ten thousand year spirit beasts. Fortunately it doesn't have any particular attack abilities."

Grandmaster's reminder was clearly just right, watching the Unicorn Armored Beast tumbling from the sky, Liu Erlong leapt up fiercely. As the slaughtering corner of the Golden Iron Triangle, what she liked the most was this kind of opponent that could take a beating. Only this was sufficient to let her blood reeking side come out.

Zhao Wuji and Flender simultaneously withdrew their Flying God Claws, Flender shouting loudly:

"Erlong, there are so many children here, don't make it too gory."

"Got it."

Liu Erlong agreed. She had already grabbed the thousand year Unicorn Armored Beast's tail with one hand, and using strength she

unexpectedly whirled the entire five meter long, weighing more than a thousand jin^[2] Unicorn Armored Beast into the air.

Hong——

Everyone's eyelids unconsciously twitched simultaneously, and the spirit beasts outside the poison formation also seemed to be still for a moment as the ground shook. That Unicorn Armored Beast with its astonishing defense had actually been completely slammed into the ground by Liu Erlong's brute strength, only a section of its tail stuck up above the surface, held in Liu Erlong's hand.

The Shrek Seven Devils finally saw a smiling expression on Liu Erlong's face, and by their reckoning, this should be the smile of a demon.

Even though the Unicorn Armored Beast had high defense, with its enormous body being thrown so heavily, even if it wasn't injured it would still be confused. Further adding that it had already breathed in the poison Dugu Bo arranged in the poison formation as soon as it entered, its bodily functions were quickly dropping. Right now in Liu Erlong's hands it was as defenseless as a common animal.

Liu Erlong basically didn't give it time to prepare to struggle, blazing red light blossoming from her entire body, with a smile on her face saying to everyone:

"I'll bring this little fellow aside to play for a moment, you do the rest. Rongrong, cover your eyes and follow teacher."

Ning Rongrong looked stupidly at Liu Erlong, her feet not shifting a single step, her face clearly displaying a dismayed expression.

Liu Erlong's expression chilled,

"What? You don't believe your teacher has the capability to subdue this Unicorn Armored Beast? That's fine too, no need to cover your eyes. Teacher will give you a class."

"I, I....."

When Ning Rongrong was panicked and at her wits' end, her eyes

suddenly blackened as a strip of cloth stretched out from behind her, blinding her eyes. Just when she was even more panicked, Oscar's soft magnetic voice rose next to her ear.

"Rongrong, don't be afraid. Teacher Erlong has good intentions. I'll go with you. With me here, nothing will happen. Teacher Erlong, can I go along?"

Liu Erlong glanced at Oscar, nodded and said:

"Then come together. However, you're a man, no need to cover your eyes. Increasing your experience a bit is also good."

While speaking, she once again whirled up the by now regained consciousness Unicorn Armored Beast in her hand as it began to struggle, relying on brute force throwing the Unicorn Armored Beast further into the poison formation, into a piece of forest to the side.

Oscar pulled Ning Rongrong's hand and followed. Right now Ning Rongrong unconsciously took full advantage of Oscar's grip on her hand, clutching his hand like a life saving rice straw.

Flender helplessly shook his head,

"Oscar this kid is unexpectedly so brave. Really, that Erlong. After so many years her old defects have gotten even more intense."

As he spoke, his gaze floated over to Grandmaster with a rebuking light.

Grandmaster didn't meet Flender's gaze, but lowered his head, what he thought of unknown.

"Little San, have you thought of what spirit beast you want? Me and your teacher Zhao will settle it for you."

Flender loudly asked Tang San.

Tang San's eyes revealed a hesitant light. To be precise, among the spirit beasts outside there were a quite a few that suited him, but he chose a different spirit beast. The roads of cultivation actually had a great number of differences. Even though the fourth spirit ring wasn't as important as the third, it had a bridging effect; once chosen, he

would be unable to change his future development direction. Therefore he hesitated, not knowing just what to choose for himself.

Part 2

At this moment Grandmaster spoke up,

“Pick that Man Faced Demon Spider. It’s roughly close to six thousand years cultivation, compared to those other spirit beasts outside, absorbing its spirit ring shouldn’t be a problem. It’s the same kind as the spirit beast you hunted last time, so as long as you absorb its energy you could not only empower your third spirit ring, but at the same time you might also have a fourth spirit ability for self defense. Your external spirit bone would also improve because of absorbing a spirit beast with the same attributes. It should be your best choice at present, with enormous benefits for your strength.”

While saying this, Grandmaster looked at Tang San with a somewhat puzzled gaze. He had already taught Tang San enough that what he could see, Tang San clearly should also be able to see. Since it was like this, why would he still hesitate? Man Faced Demon Spiders were extremely rare. Because of their tyranny, they would frequently be jointly attacked by other spirit beasts. Able to reach six thousand years of cultivation was already extraordinarily powerful. For Tang San it was bound to have superb effect.

But against Grandmaster’s expectations, the always unusually obedient Tang San now shook his head,

“I’m sorry, Teacher, can you let me choose this fourth spirit ring for myself? Dean Flender, teacher Zhao, I choose that Pit Demon Spider^[3].”

“What did you say?”

Without waiting for Flender and Zhao Wuji to react, Grandmaster already spoke up with alarm and anger, reaching Tang San’s side with big steps, one hand grabbing his shoulder,

“Are you insane? Don’t you see that’s a ten thousand year spirit beast? Moreover, I’m certain that even though it’s a ten thousand year level, the advantages to you are in no way greater than the Man Faced Demon Spider. Don’t forget, you have a unique External Spirit Bone. Strengthening it is even more important than strengthening your Blue Silver Grass.”

Hearing Tang San’s choice, how couldn’t Grandmaster be anxious? He clearly understood that even though this disciple of his had twin spirits, without settling the issue of his body collapsing from later excessive attributes of the second spirit, right now he was still only a Blue Silver Grass Spirit Master.

Along with spirit power increasing and spirit rings adding up, this standard of waste spirits Blue Silver Grass would reveal more and more weaknesses. Both Dai Mubai’s White Tiger Spirit and Ma Hongjun’s Phoenix Spirit were no doubt first rate spirits, and their spirit abilities would also become more and more terrifying because of their foundation. But Tang San wasn’t as fortunate, and even though Blue Silver Grass had a powerful adaptability, it still couldn’t compare to the Fire Phoenix or Evil Eye White Tiger, let alone the number one support spirit Seven Treasure Glazed Tile Pagoda. Among the other six Shrek Seven Devils, any one spirit was stronger than his.

If Tang San didn’t possess plentiful knowledge, a cool head, as well as obtaining the Man Faced Demon Spider’s external spirit bone at the thirtieth rank, then right now his strength would already be far away from the others’. Of course, Grandmaster never believed Tang San’s hidden weapons and the poisons he studied with the Poison Douluo could have any effect. In his world, as a Spirit Master, one’s own strength was most important.

Right now Grandmaster was so agitated precisely because of these reasons. The most important growth from choosing a second Man Faced Demon Spider for his spirit ring was for his Eight Spider Lances. Even though Grandmaster couldn’t be sure what level the Eight Spider Lances would grow to, the Eight Spider Lances’ was bound to increase, and would also bring up Tang San’s strength. With the evolution capability of this external spirit bone, Tang San’s

strength wouldn't be too far behind the others.

But right now even though he couldn't say Tang San's own first choice of the Pit Demon Spider was no good, to his future development it clearly wasn't as good as the Man Faced Demon Spider.

The Pit Demon Spider and the Man Faced Demon Spider were both considered top tier existences among arachnid spirit beasts, they only walked different routes. The Man Faced Demon Spider was widely known for its tyrannical attack power and extreme toxicity, while the Pit Demon Spider hunted its enemy in a different fashion. Even though it wasn't as famous as the Man Faced Demon Spider, it also wasn't as addicted to killing, but the Man Face Demon Spider also couldn't compare to it in hidden danger.

The Man Faced Demon Spider specialized in terror, speed, and potent attack power, but the Pit Demon Spider was best at taking advantage of the terrain to create all sorts of traps for the opponent, relying on its special ability to ensnare its prey. Its spider thread was completely different from the Man Faced Demon Spider. It wasn't poisonous, but could take any kind of shape. Unlike the single use of the Man Faced Demon Spider, it was used to bury the opponent alive.

In strength, the Pit Demon Spider certainly wasn't a match for the Man Faced Demon Spider in a frontal attack, but if it was given familiar terrain or perhaps allowed to pull open the distance, then the Man Faced Demon Spider would certainly die.

Outside the poison formation there were just one of each. That Man Faced Demon Spider was alone outside the throng of spirit beasts, ice cold light flickering in its little eyes, attentively watching their side. The Pit Demon Spider clearly had a much better affinity with animals than it, mixed in together with the other spirit beasts, its build one size smaller than the Man Faced Demon Spider, but as long as one observed carefully one could discover that this Pit Demon Spider should have just entered the ten thousand year level. Its body and eight spider legs were slim, but clearly without the Man Faced Demon Spider's kind of slender vigor, its ash gray body not the

slightest bit eye catching among the seemingly very powerful spirit beasts. But in the vicinity of its body were some yellow filaments, that was its spider web.

The way Grandmaster saw it, the reason Tang San chose the Pit Demon Spider was no doubt because it wasn't as ruthless as the Man Faced Demon Spider, and its spirit ring would be easier to absorb. Moreover this Pit Demon Spider possessed ten thousand years of cultivation. But such a choice was clearly unwise, far from as good as the result that six thousand years Man Faced Demon Spider could give his external spirit bone.

But, what Grandmaster didn't expect was that as Tang San looked at him his eyes were extremely resolute,

"Teacher, please let me choose the Pit Demon Spider. I believe, right now it should be even more useful to me."

"Why? Justify it to me."

The pride at the bottom of Grandmaster's heart was far from comparable to Flender, but right now looking at his always clever disciple unexpectedly disobeying him, his voice clearly grew colder. But he also wasn't an autocratic senior, therefore he wanted Tang San to tell him a reason.

Tang San only spoke very simply, at once making clear his reasons for choosing the Pit Demon Spider,

"Teacher, I choose it because the Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament is about to begin."

Grandmaster first looked distracted, then immediately reacted, the ice chill at the corners of his eyes melting, looking at the disciple in front of him, he couldn't keep a regretful light from showing in his eyes, his grip on Tang San's shoulder unconsciously tightening,

"But, haven't you thought of yourself?"

How couldn't Tang San know the benefits of the Man Faced Demon Spider spirit ring would be even greater, but, while choosing the Man Faced Demon Spider spirit ring would strengthen his own Eight

Spider Lances and Spider Web Restraint, his fourth spirit ability would very possibly only be a support effect for his third spirit ability.

Without doubt, Spider Web Restraint was extremely powerful in restraint and complemented Tang San's hidden weapons techniques well, but, it consumed too much spirit power. Even after Tang San's spirit power rose to the fortieth rank, with full spirit power he could only use it four times. If the fourth spirit ring strengthened the third, then perhaps the restraining capability would grow even stronger, but at the same time the spirit power consumption would be enormous. It would very possible become a one use attack.

This was of course no problem when facing an opponent one versus one, but Tang San didn't forget that he was part of the Shrek Seven Devils, and even more the only control system Spirit Master among them. As the soul of the team, with the Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament about to begin, he couldn't think only of himself, but had to consider the entire team as a whole.

Even though the Pit Demon Spider was unable to strengthen Tang San's external spirit bone like the Man Faced Demon Spider, Tang San was certain that the Pit Demon Spider spirit ring definitely would improve his control capability. Moreover it could very possibly be a group control type ability. This would possess enormous benefits to a team like the Shrek Seven Devils, in a team fight there was no need to doubt the advantages of crowd control capability.

In order to balance the gap in assistance to himself between the Pit Demon Spider and Man Faced Demon Spider, as well as as far as possible not let himself fall behind the others, after careful consideration that ten thousand year Pit Demon Spider was clearly his best choice.

Grandmaster understood all this, and secretly sighed with regret. Even though Tang San's choice wasn't the best for himself, it was no doubt the most proper one. His view of the big picture already surpassed his own. Having such a selfless disciple made him feel happy on one hand, but at the same time also somewhat regretful.

"Teacher, perhaps, this Pit Demon Spider will also give me a spirit bone?"

Tang San consoled Grandmaster in his own way.

Grandmaster snorted, saying:

“Little San, even though your body is already more resilient than Mubai and also have the energy from the level surpassing spirit ring, don’t forget that this time you’re skipping a whole five thousand years of cultivation. Do you believe that you could successfully absorb a ten thousand year spirit beast? For the sake of the team it’s even more important not to endanger yourself, do you understand? Therefore I will persist in my opinion, the man Faced Demon Spider is still the best choice for you.”

Tang San tightened his fists,

“Grandmaster, believe in me, I can definitely do it. I once took two immortal treasure herbs at Dugu Bo’s place, these two herbs had a muscle developing and essence exchanging effect on my body, recreating it from the bone, my physique is even more resilient than you imagine. Moreover, right here I still have another advantage. Taking those two immortal treasure herbs lets me absorb the spirit ring in a special place. Thus, I have practically a ninety percent certainty in succeeding.”

Part 3

“Out of the question, unless it’s a hundred percent, I won’t let you take the chance!”

This time the speaker wasn’t Grandmaster, but rather Xiao Wu quietly listening to their side.

Even Tang San couldn’t help being startled by Xiao Wu’s sudden agitation,

“Xiao Wu, don’t be like that, listen, nothing will happen to me.”

Xiao Wu looked at Tang San, her eyes brimming with obstinacy,

“Absolutely out of the question. Even if it was a nine thousand year spirit beast I would believe you could try it, but a spirit beast that has

broken through ten thousand years is an entirely different concept than a thousand year spirit beast. There's a qualitative change from hundred year to thousand year, and from thousand year to ten thousand year is an equally qualitative change. Do you think a ten thousand year spirit beast's spirit ring is so easy to absorb? First let alone the tremendous energy strike, it'll be difficult for you to withstand just the soul shock that remains after its death when you absorb it."

"Soul shock? What's that?"

Not only Tang San, even Grandmaster was startled by Xiao Wu's words. He had never heard of a concept like soul shock.

Xiao Wu calmly explained:

"Soul shock is a special capability that arises after a high level spirit beast is dead, but before its soul has dissipated. Only ten thousand year spirit beasts or above can possess it. Generally speaking, to absorb a ten thousand year spirit beast's spirit ring requires at least fiftieth rank or above spirit power. By that time the Spirit Master already possesses a certain degree of functionality in all aspects, and mental strength has also matured to a certain extent. But in spite of this you would have to be especially careful when absorbing a ten thousand year spirit ring. Besides the energy contained in the spirit ring, there's also the danger of this soul shock. To an adult, and moreover a fiftieth ranked Spirit Master, when both the body and mind has matured, the effect of such a soul shock would decrease substantially. Generally, Spirit Masters wouldn't suffer any harm. But little San, right now you're just fourteen, your body has still far from matured, and your spirit power is only fortieth rank. How can you take the risk? Even if your body can endure the energy attack, if your mindscape is destroyed by the soul shock, you'll become an idiot. Understand?"

Listening to Xiao Wu, Grandmaster couldn't keep from drawing a cool breath,

"Xiao Wu, how do you know this?"

Xiao Wu looked distracted a moment, lowering her head:

“My mom told me.”

“Soul shock, soul shock.....”

There was a pondering light in Tang San’s eyes.

Xiao Wu believed she had already moved him,

“Ge, you said you would always protect me. That’s why you can’t let anything happen to you. I beg of you, listen to Grandmaster, that six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider is still good, why take the risk on a ten thousand year spirit ring?”

Tang San naturally wouldn’t explain to Xiao Wu just what made him choose the Pit Demon Spider, but his decision hadn’t weakened because of Xiao Wu’s words.

“If I can avert the soul shock, does that mean I can make the attempt? Originally I only had a ninety percent certainty, but after listening to you, I have a hundred percent certainty instead.”

Tang San rubbed Xiao Wu’s head, his face relaxed.

Xiao Wu doubtfully looked at him,

“I don’t believe you. Ge, you’re not fooling me.”

Tang San asked:

“Did I ever cheat you?”

Xiao Wu subconsciously shook her head.

Tang San said:

“Xiao Wu. You forget I ate the immortal treasure herb ‘Full Moon Wearing Autumn Dew’. With your warning, relying on Purple Demon Eye I have absolute certainty in making that ten thousand year spirit beast unable to cause me soul shock. I can even substantially reduce its resentment. Trust me, I won’t play with my life. You’re right, I still need this life to protect you in the future.”

Looking at Tang San, Xiao Wu suddenly smiled. Her smile was exceptionally beautiful, especially in Tang San’s eyes it was even

more perfect.

Pulling the scorpion braid in front, Xiao Wu took a step forward, her whole body practically pasted to Tang San, gentle red lips gathering at Tang San's ear, quietly saying:

"Fine, then you go. Only, Ge, you have to remember: if you die, then I'll accompany you."

Even though her voice was very quiet, the force of the shock the sound made in Tang San's ear was comparable to Liu Erlong's explosive scene a few nights ago. Especially her last words were especially brimming with certainty. Clearly she wasn't joking.

Honestly, right now Tang San's heart began to hesitate. Just like he said before, he only had a ninety percent certainty in absorbing the Pit Demon Spider's spirit ring. Even if he could avert the soul shock with Xiao Wu's warning, he still only had a ninety percent certainty. The higher level absorption, if any uncertain element could appear and he couldn't retreat, how could it go well for Tang San?

Tang San of course wasn't willing to die, and he was even more unwilling to play with his and Xiao Wu's lives. But at this moment he didn't have a better choice. Truly choosing that Man Faced Demon Spider? No. In an eyeblink he thought clearly again. He wouldn't go back on decisions he had already made. When doing something, while adequate preparation was important, equally important was confidence in success. What Xiao Wu said was equal to pushing him over the edge. Just like last time when he took the chance on absorbing the Man Faced Demon Spider spirit ring. For Xiao Wu he could definitely endure, and even more, he still had his preparations.

Thinking of this, Tang San nodded resolutely to Xiao Wu, then turned to Flender,

"Dean, teacher Zhao, I'll trouble you. I want that Pit Demon Spider."

Flender sternly said:

"Little San, have you really thought it through? You should understand the consequences of absorbing something like it."

Tang San said without the slightest hesitation:

“Dean, I’ll definitely succeed. Don’t forget, I have two spirits, and I still have the external spirit bone and immortal treasure herbs. What’s a ten thousand year spirit beast?”

“Well, ambitious. Then I’ll wish you success.”

Flender saw the conviction to push forward in Tang San’s eyes. He knew that it would be useless to say anything more; even Grandmaster and Xiao Wu couldn’t persuade him.

Right now, not far away in the forest, boom after boom echoed constantly. Even though nobody saw it with their own eyes, they could still imagine the lamentable fate of that Unicorn Armored Beast. At the same time it made everyone’s resolution not to provoke Liu Erlong even stauncher.

People needed to vent, and women especially so. Liu Erlong was unable to be together with the person she loved the most, making her original killing intent grow close to a frenzy. She had been born as a woman, but had never had a childhood. In order to become even stronger, in order to provide justice for her mother, she had worked hard practically without rest as a child. But the final result? Before she could win success and recognition, her mother had already gone far away. Since then, slaughter had been her greatest pleasure, only seeing the blood of her enemies blossoming in her hands, seeing her enemies life trickle down her fingers, would she feel relaxed and delighted.

Afterwards, the extreme pain from the even more tragic affair between her and Grandmaster made her blood purge a spirit beast forest. The massacred place was since irredeemable. Encountering her hands, even if it was only a small evil, it would still be extinguished without chance of life. Until Flender saw her again one day, and after continuously straightening her out, Liu Erlong restrained herself somewhat. After parting with Flender she established the Blue Tyrant Academy, cultivating her character by herself in the Academy forest to restrain her killing instinct.

Grandmaster appearing was both a good thing and a bad thing in Liu

Erlong's opinion. What was good was that they could finally meet again, reigniting the flame of hope in Liu Erlong's heart. But at the same time, the heart she had calmed with great difficulty boiled once again, and after being rejected by Grandmaster several times, the bloodlust in her heart burst forth again, even more seriously than before. If it wasn't for Flender and Grandmaster being here, as well as these several children, perhaps her bloodlust would have expressed itself even more violently.

Flender understood this, and naturally Grandmaster also understood. But right now which of them could persuade Liu Erlong?

The Flying God Claw flashed out like lightning, accurately landing on the Pit Demon Spider.

Perhaps it was because the Unicorn Armored Beast's previous experience had been seen by these powerful spirit beasts, and perhaps also because they were too intelligent, but the instant it saw the Flying God Claw about to grab the Pit Demon Spider, that ten thousand year Pit Demon Spider suddenly moved swiftly, a layer of yellow spider web shooting out from below its feet, blocking its front like a shield.

With two pu pu sounds, the Flying God Claws grabbed the spider web. Flender and Zhao Wuji hurriedly controlled the God Claw to fly back, but making them not know whether to laugh or cry, at the same time as the claws flew back, so did a massive yellow spider web. Using one phrase to describe their current circumstances, it would be 'walking right into the the trap'.

The ten thousand year Pit Demon Spider was even more devious than everyone had imagined, not only sending back a spider web with the Flying God Claws, but at the same time that Pit Demon Spider retreated extremely quickly, dodging behind a large spirit beast, and moreover running swiftly towards the forest. It moved quickly, not a bit inferior to the Man Faced Demon Spider.

1. (麟甲兽) The first character is the female half of Qilin (麒麟), which isn't quite a unicorn and has a tendency towards antlers more than horns, but unicorn is more expressive than "Lin Armor Beast".
2. 1000斤 = 500 kg
3. (地穴魔蛛) "Ground Hole Demon Spider"

087 – Ten Thousand Year Pit Demon Spider

Part 1

“Fatty.”

Tang San calmly called out.

Flame blossomed, great puffs of phoenix flame engulfing Flender and Zhao Wuji, the spider web on the Flying God Claws immediately turning to ash. Fatty’s high temperature phoenix flame was the perfect nemesis for this kind of spider web. Although in strength he was far inferior to the Pit Demon Spider, the phoenix flame still wasn’t something the spider web the Pit Demon Spider had hurriedly sent out could resist.

Flender and Zhao Wuji were both furious, two Spirit Sages being toyed with by a just ten thousand year spirit beast, and in front of their students as well, this was absolutely a loss of face.

Flender grinned angrily,

“Want to run, it won’t be that easy.”

A resonant eagle cry echoed to the horizon, the Shrek Seven Devils only saw Flender leap up, instantly huddling up, floating in the air above Zhao Wuji’s arms. The next moment his body already shot out like a cannonball, thrown out with all of Zhao Wuji’s strength. In the blink of an eye he had already flown out of the poison formation’s range, passing over the heads of those formidable spirit beasts, and in another blink he was overhead of that slippery Pit Demon Spider.

In order to catch it, right now seven spirit rings flickered around Flender in midair, his body changing into an enormous owl with a five meter wingspan, unexpectedly he used his seventh spirit ability, Owl Avatar.

The Owl had the keenest strength, capable of seeing minute details at night, its ability to pounce and catch prey from the air not the slightest bit inferior to the goshawk. Watching Flender drop from the sky, sharp claws stretching out below, grabbing straight at the Pit Demon Spider. Before they had even touched, his enormous spirit power pressure made the swiftly escaping Pit Demon Spider shudder uncontrollably.

What spirit beast would save another? Let alone when the Pit Demon Spider was running away so swiftly, already having pulled open the distance to those spirit beasts outside the poison formation. In order to distract the spirit beasts from interfering with Flender catching the Pit Demon Spider, right now Tang San had taken out the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure and handed it over to Xiao Wu at his side.

The muted fragrance immediately drew the gazes of those spirit beasts outside, each and every one drooling, staring rigidly.

Even though the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure was good, life was more important. Tang San had Xiao Wu stand just where it wouldn't envelop the poison formation, so the spirit beasts couldn't take advantage of its anti toxic effects.

With the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure handed over to Xiao Wu, Tang San used the same method Flender did, getting thrown out by Zhao Wuji. He of course wasn't worried Flender couldn't deal with that Pit Demon Spider, only with his help and his control capability, capturing it could only become even easier. After all, the crowd of spirit beasts outside the poison formation weren't vegetarians, and even with the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure there to draw their attention, it still couldn't be guaranteed not to get involved. If they let that Pit Demon Spider get away, then finding another suitable one definitely wouldn't be so easy.

In a moment the Pit Demon Spider was unable to even dodge the pouncing Flender when faced with the tyrannical pressure, even Tang San who came soaring out of the poison formation soon after believed Flender would succeed. But it was also at this moment that the Pit Demon Spider revealed its devious side.

A yellow spider web suddenly sprayed out behind it, going straight for Flender. At the same time two yellow spider threads stretched out forward like lightning, twisting around a large tree ten meters away, using strength to pull made the Pit Demon Spider immediately change direction.

Flender beat his wings, a blast of wind blowing away the spider web, but with this brief delay his attack had already come to nothing. And at the moment Flender approached the ground, with a flash of yellow light, countless spider threads rushed out from underground, swiftly enveloping him, holding Flender within like a prison made out of spider web.

Compared to the Man Faced Demon Spider, the Pit Demon Spider's spider thread was a bit thicker, and even though it wasn't poisonous, its durability exceeded that of the Man Faced Demon Spider's spider thread. Moreover a thick liquid adhered to it, and the instant it came into contact with the air, the spider web hardened like steel, becoming a true spider cage.

This was precisely the Pit Demon Spider's devious ability, Spider Web Prison. As long as the Pit Demon Spider had passed over the location once it could hide its spider thread in the ground, and this kind of spider thread could be controlled by its mental strength. As long as the enemy stepped into the range of this trap it would launch immediately, relying on its special spider thread characteristics to form a cage around the enemy. If the enemy was weak it would take advantage of it and attack, and if the enemy was strong it could take advantage of this ability to gain time to escape.

As a result of the spider web prison launching without any warning or energy fluctuations, it was possible for even stronger enemies to fall into the trap.

Unfortunately, the enemy this Pit Demon Spider had come across was the seventy eighth ranked spirit power Spirit Sage Flender. Seeing he was caught in a trap, Flender immediately revealed his strength. A layer of pale yellow light released from his Owl Avatar form. Immediately afterward the light spread in a flash, as if a sun was trapped within the spider web prison.

An an ear piercing friction sound resounded, and crack after crack spread over the spider web prison. In just a few breaths, that spider web prison burst into a fine powder.

Flender wouldn't give the Pit Demon Spider the chance for a second plot. Both wings unfolding, he flew directly into the air. Even though the spider web prison was sinister, it required the ground or a substantial foundation to work, a bit like Tang San's second spirit ring ability Parasite, but it was also more tyrannical than Parasite. But now that Flender flew into the air, clearly he wasn't afraid of this ability.

As Flender once again flew into the air he was secretly alarmed, because that Pit Demon Spider was even faster than he imagined. In the moment he had spent breaking out of the spider web prison, that fellow had already vanished without a trace in the forest, not even leaving a hint of its aura.

This was precisely the other ability of the Pit Demon Spider, concealment. It wasn't an ability to hide, but rather relying on its control of its own aura to completely restrain it, making it even easier to hide to ambush the opponent or escape.

Having lost track of the Pit Demon Spider, Flender couldn't help being angry. A sharp light at the tips of his wings, about to unleash it on this piece of forest.

"Dean, no need for that. It's on this side."

At this time Tang San's voice came from ahead. With Flender's speed of reaction, opening up he swiftly chased after the voice, just in time to see the Eight Spider Lances on Tang San's back releasing to catch him. Not far in front, that Pit Demon Spider was struggling with all its strength in Tang San's spider web, in a moment already tearing open a gap.

Originally the Pit Demon Spider had caught Flender in the spider web prison, but following close behind him, Tang San had calmly chased after it. Relying on his keen judgement, the moment Flender was trapped in the spider web prison, Tang San had quickly used the peculiar mental attack of the Purple Demon Eye, making the fleeing

Pit Demon Spider mind dizzy, sinking into a brief stunned condition.

‘You can use abilities, don’t tell me I can’t?’ Spider Web Restraint accurately hit the Pit Demon Spider, and this time, Tang San’s spider web held intense poison. As a result, despite the Pit Demon Spider’s ten thousand year cultivation, as it struggled its mind was affected by intense pain from the neurological poison that covered its whole body, while the corrosive poison eroded its carapace. The speed with which it threw off the spider web immediately slowed, winning enough time for Flender to arrive.

Flender smiled in spite of his anger,

“What a cunning thing, if I let you run again, then I’m not called the Four Eyed Owl.”

A resonant eagle cry echoed with fury as Flender dropped from the sky. Both his wings beat twice in midair, sharp rays of light left four deep scores in the ground, just right to crowd the Pit Demon Spider in between. The ten meter deep ravines left its location completely isolated.

Right now the Pit Demon Spider had with great difficulty freed itself from Tang San’s Spider Web Restraint, the sharp pain making it panic even more, but the sharp energy suddenly erupting right next to it made it flinch back, and at this moment Flender also dropped from the sky.

Pu——, yet again a yellow spider web flew up from below the Pit Demon Spider’s feet, but this time it wasn’t an attack at Flender, but rather enveloping itself in that spider web prison.

With a sonorous striking noise, Flender’s sharp claws tore up the cage, but taking advantage of his speed slowing down, the Pit Demon Spider leapt directly into the ravine in front of it. This Pit Demon Spider’s name wasn’t in vain, among arachnid spirit beasts it was the only one that dug holes. Its eight spider legs wouldn’t appear as powerful as the Man Faced Demon Spider, but its two front legs were especially robust and sharp, and if it hadn’t been chased too closely before, it would have already looked for an opportunity to drill away through the ground. Right now it was faced

with the ravines made by Flender, and it took advantage of just these to run away.

“I won’t let you.”

The Flying God Claw shot down from the sky, accurately grabbing the Pit Demon Spider’s back carapace. It was powerful, and even though Tang San urged his full spirit power after releasing the Flying God Claw he was still rapidly pulled forward.

Part 2

The spider web prison only stopped Flender briefly, and with Tang San delaying it the Pit Demon Spider lost its last chance to escape. A massive claw firmly gripped the back of its carapace, and even though it couldn’t directly penetrate the carapace it could still drag back the rigid Pit Demon Spider.

“Come up little San, let’s go back.”

Flender shouted.

The Eight Spider Lances on Tang San’s back bent and straightened, throwing him into the air to land on the back of the owl incarnated Flender. Carrying Tang San on his back, claws gripping the Pit Demon Spider, Flender’s wings beat fiercely once sending him into the air. This time even if the Pit Demon Spider was even more cunning, it still wouldn’t have had any chance. The acute spirit power transmitted into its body from the claws paralysed it completely, making it unable to use any more abilities.

Tang San and Flender flew out of the forest, and with a few beats of Flender’s wings they had already reached the poison formation. Flender shifted his wings, and they slowly descended towards the ground.

By now Liu Erlong and Oscar had already returned. Ning Rongrong wasn’t here, clearly she was absorbing the Unicorn Armored Beast’s spirit ring in the forest. Oscar’s complexion seemed very unsightly, white as a sheet of paper, and even somewhat green. There were

some stains left over at the corner of his mouth, evidently he had vomited heavily. Liu Erlong didn't give the impression of anything being wrong, and standing with her hands behind her back she looked at Flender dropping from the sky with the Pit Demon Spider in his claws.

At this moment Tang San suddenly shouted,

“Xiao Wu, watch out!”

As a result of Flender dropping from the sky with Tang San on his back, and the spirit beasts outside not daring to enter the poison formation, right now everyone's eyes were on the two of them. But at this moment a sinister silhouette entered the poison formation from the side, swiftly pouncing towards Xiao Wu. The place it attacked from was extremely crafty, just in a blindspot for everyone, but just right to be caught by Tang San on Flender's back.

This sudden attack wasn't launched by a stranger, but precisely the Man Faced Demon Spider Tang San and Grandmaster had paid attention to before. This six thousand year or so cultivated Man Faced Demon Spider had constantly waited for its chance. It could of course sense the strength of those humans in the poison formation, and the moment Flender and Tang San dropping from the sky drew their attention, it got the perfect moment to strike.

As one of the peak poison attribute spirit beasts, and with six thousand years of cultivation, even though the Poison Douluo's poison formation held a certain danger to it, it wasn't to the extent of being fatal. Relying on its poison resisting physique, this Man Faced Demon Spider had confidence in surviving in the poison formation, and with the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, leaving the poison formation didn't pose any problem. Therefore it chose this moment to mount a sneak attack the other spirit beasts didn't dare attempt.

The place the Man Faced Demon Spider chose was closest to Xiao Wu. Right now, the strongest in the Shrek Academy party, Flender, was in the air, Liu Erlong was also standing together with Zhao Wuji furthest away from Xiao Wu. Dai Mubai had gone to help protect Zhu Zhuqing while she absorbed the Phantom Tiger's spirit ring.

Oscar also stood next to Liu Erlong. Closest to Xiao Wu were only Grandmaster and Ma Hongjun.

The first to react was unexpectedly Grandmaster. In a flicker he already blocked in front of Xiao Wu, Luo San Pao releasing. The figure soaring directly into the air and turning, a farting noise echoing towards the charging opponent. Precisely that 'fart like thunder, shake the heavens and split the earth Luo San Pao.'

Although Luo San Pao already had three spirit rings, and Grandmaster's spirit power had also reached the thirty fifth rank, compared to a six thousand year cultivation Man Faced Demon Spider, the strength gap was still too large.

That smelly attack only made the Man Faced Demon Spider slow its advance, and it kept dashing at Grandmaster and Xiao Wu as if it basically didn't smell the stench of that fart, one forelimb swinging to and fro, whipping out to strike Luo San Pao from the air.

If it wasn't for the Man Faced Demon Spider already having entered the range of the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, the poison supplemented to its spider legs would have been enough to leave Luo San Pao barely alive.

Another three limbs stretched forward simultaneously, the legs sharp like spear tips thrusting straight at Grandmaster's chest. Its target was of course not only Grandmaster, but at the same time Xiao Wu behind him, and with the length of its spider legs it completely held the capability of piercing both of them together.

"Pu——"

A dazzling red column of flame shot out from the side, heavily bombarding the Man Faced Demon Spider. The flames adhered directly to it, issuing an unpleasant stink. Fatty in impatience was unable to launch more powerful spirit abilities, and could only spit out the Phoenix Fire Wire to injure the opponent as much as possible.

Originally a two thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider put Tang San at risk of dying, to say nothing of this six thousand year existence in front of them. Even a ten thousand year spirit beast

wouldn't easily want to provoke this butcher. The Man Faced Demon Spider's ice cold little eyes didn't reveal any emotions over Fatty's attack, and was still so sinister and unfeeling, as if its body wasn't burning at all. The position its spider legs aimed for didn't vary in the slightest, still thrusting at Grandmaster's chest.

With a flicker of light and shadow, Xiao Wu quietly appeared in front of Grandmaster. Her one hand borrowed leverage by pushing at Grandmaster's shoulder, both legs flying out simultaneously, accurately kicking below two of those spider legs. The Man Faced Demon Spider's legs rose slightly, practically brushing the top of her head.

In order to fight for time, Xiao Wu couldn't help the mental backlash she would suffer, and the light of Demon Confusion stung the little eyes on the Man Faced Demon Spider's abdomen, making it delay for a short moment. At the same time Xiao Wu once again stepped on the Man Faced Demon Spider's legs, using the rebound as leverage to forcefully push away Grandmaster behind her, just right to meet the hastily dashing over Liu Erlong.

At this very moment, the Man Faced Demon Spider and Xiao Wu were practically pasted to each other while attacking. Grandmaster had been pushed away from the danger zone, Fatty's spirit power had just now congregated, and the others basically didn't have enough time to strike away that Man Faced Demon Spider.

In an instant, Tang San's heart had already leapt into his throat. Nobody understood the terror of the Man Faced Demon Spider more clearly than him. At that time, if it wasn't for him acting when least expected and the potency of the Godly Zhuge Crossbow, he would already have died in the Star Dou Great Forest. The pain absorbing the Man Faced Demon Spider gave him he would never forget for a lifetime. Right now, Xiao Wu and the Man Faced Demon Spider in close combat, that was a six thousand year butcher, and Xiao Wu had the weakest spirit power among the Shrek Seven Devils.

Each of the six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider's legs had orderly rows of small barbs, and even though the toxin on its body was unable to cause any harm to Xiao Wu under the effect of the

Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, if it pierced Xiao Wu's skin, the toxin would still spread through her veins. That was in no way something Xiao Wu could resist. Moreover, just because of these barbs Xiao Wu didn't dare use her Soft Skill on the Man Faced Demon Spider.

The use of Teleportation had a cooldown period. Xiao Wu had use it once just now, and right now in close combat with the Man Faced Demon Spider she couldn't rely on it to dodge again. The only thing she could do was endure, endure until her companions arrived to help her.

The Man Faced Demon Spider was clearly completely infuriated, its rear legs propping it up, its four lance-like forelegs thrust at Xiao Wu from four different directions, deathly pale light erupting from its body. This time, it clearly used its full strength.

Just the opposite from Xiao Wu, the Man Faced Demon Spider's only chance was to take advantage of nobody else having reached attack range to grab the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure and escape. It had seen with its own eyes what happened to the Unicorn Armored Beast and the Pit Demon Spider, so how couldn't it know how frightening these humans in front of it were?

Xiao Wu moved extremely quickly, and also had abundant combat experience. When doing her utmost she wouldn't stint on her spirit power in any way, and pouring strength into her legs, while escaping danger by a hair's breadth, she kicked out four times, separately striking the weakest points of each of those four stinging spider legs. She knew that as long as she was able to get out of this attack, the help of her comrades would arrive.

The moment Xiao Wu's legs kicked at the four spider leg pikes with full strength, her heart was already ice cold. That instant, she clearly felt that her kicks at those spider legs was like a butterfly shaking a stone tower, fundamentally unable to alter their attack power, and even more unable to change their direction.

Xiao Wu after all only had thirty seventh ranked spirit power, the gap to the six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider attacking with all its strength the gap was really too large.

The little eyes under the Man Faced Demon Spider's abdomen revealed a malevolent light. It had long ago planned ahead: as long as it could kill this human girl in front of it and snatch the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, it would immediately spray out several spider webs at the people around to obstruct their attacks. In speed, relying on those four meter long spider legs, its running speed wasn't something the Pit Demon Spider could compare to.

When Xiao Wu's four kicks accurately struck the spider legs, all the Shrek Academy group almost cheered, but as they saw those four spider legs didn't change direction, their hearts went completely cold.

In this extreme crisis, Xiao Wu could only curl up as much as possible, making herself the smallest possible target. However, even if she curled up even more, it would still be impossible to evade all the attacks. The Man Faced Demon Spider's four spider lances perfectly sealed all her possible routes of escape.

Three spider lances thrust past, practically pasted to Xiao Wu's body, but that final spider leg in the end couldn't be dodged, and ruthlessly ran into Xiao Wu's chest.

Part 3

Instantly, everyone's brains blanked out. Even though the piercing blow should hit the right side of Xiao Wu's chest, how powerful was the Man Faced Demon Spider's poison? Xiao Wu would inevitably be run through, and such an injury combined with the Man Faced Demon Spider's poison wasn't something Xiao Wu could possibly survive.

Everything happened too fast it was practically hard to catch it with the naked eye. Xiao Wu's body was directly flung away close to twenty meters by the spider leg, but her hand still tightly gripped that Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure, refusing to let go no matter what.

As Xiao Wu was flung away, the Man Faced Demon Spider seemed

to stare blankly a moment. Even though it's goal in attacking Xiao Wu was attained, it still hadn't obtained the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure.

"Go die!"

Fatty who was closest was the first to erupt, his Phoenix Ascension had now finally finished coalescing, and he struck that Man Faced Demon Spider with all his strength and burning hot flame in the side.

At the same time, having caught Grandmaster, Liu Erlong's eyes turned scarlet. Xiao Wu had pushed away Grandmaster while in a crisis herself, separating him from danger. Just this point made Liu Erlong full of gratitude towards her. Seeing her without a chance to survive under the Man Faced Demon Spider's attack made the ruthlessness in Liu Erlong's heart practically reach a new peak.

With a close to frenzied dragon's roar, her whole body emitted flames that directly formed into an enormous fire dragon, chasing after the Phoenix Ascension to strike away the Man Faced Demon Spider several meters, swallowing it up in a flash.

The six thousand year cultivation Man Faced Demon Spider struggled in the dragon shaped flame, but it was still unable to escape the tyrannical gravity within the flame.

Fire in itself possessed a restraining effect on poisonous things, whether it was Fatty's phoenix flame or Liu Erlong's dragon flame, they were both among the most potent existences among flames. Fatty's flame possessed the even more powerful adherence property that was comparatively insidious, but Liu Erlong's dragon flame only possessed one property: explosiveness. Under the simultaneous effect of these two kinds of flame, even the Man Faced Demon Spider's solid outer shell softened, its entire body trembling violently.

The third to reach it wasn't the flying Flender, but rather Tang San who dropped like a stone from the sky. Seeing Xiao Wu in danger, Tang San leapt from Flender's back at the same time as he shouted. Blue Silver Grass condensed into wing shapes in midair, sending him gliding in that direction.

Unfortunately, all that was really far, far too late, even if he used all his power he still couldn't reach the Man Faced Demon Spider before it speared Xiao Wu.

Watching Xiao Wu flung away, Tang San's heart instantly froze like a ten thousand year glacier, as if it had already stopped beating, and he was even unable to breathe. Looking at the conflagration below, his gaze was completely lifeless, and just like a moth drawn to flame he still fell downwards.

"Get out of the way, do you want to die?"

Liu Erlong was shocked. She was only too clear on just how potent her dragon flame was, and even though Tang San could glide with the Blue Silver Grass wings on his back, he still fell downwards. Everyone understood Tang San's place in Grandmaster's heart, and Liu Erlong naturally wouldn't want him to destroy his life in her dragon flame like this.

But Tang San didn't even seem to hear anything, and still dropped towards the Man Faced Demon Spider. Helplessly, Liu Erlong had no choice but to stop sending out her dragon flame, but despite this that dragon shaped flame wasn't extinguished immediately.

The Eight Spider Lances on Tang San's back thrust through the top of the dragon flame, and from the point of view of everyone, right now he seemed to be lying on his stomach on the back of the Man Faced Demon Spider.

The Eight Spider Lances were sharp, and right now that Man Faced Demon Spider's carapace had been further softened by the heat of the phoenix flame and dragon flame. In an instant, Eight Spider Lances had pierced into the Man Faced Demon Spider's carapace, the front half entering completely as white and red luster rose from Tang San. Strangely, Liu Erlong's tyrannical dragon flame was unable to enter within a one chi^[1] range of Tang San's body.

The instant the Eight Spider Lances entered its body, that Man Faced Demon Spider shuddered violently, and seemed as if its entire body had frozen.

Immediately afterward, it no longer struggled, but started to tremble quickly. The Eight Spider Lances Tang San had stuck into its body began to turn pale white, as if pulse after pulse of light was constantly drawn into Tang San's body via the Eight Spider Lances.

Nobody knew what was going on, and since Tang San lay prostrated, everyone was unable to see his facial expression. But with Xiao Wu's survival unknown, they could understand the suffering in Tang San's heart. Liu Erlong wanted to rush over and pull Tang San away, but was caught up to and stopped by Grandmaster.

"He's alright, help Xiao Wu first."

Grandmaster knew something of Eight Spider Lances' drain capability. Further adding that the Man Faced Demon Spider was left barely alive after Liu Erlong's dragon flame, and that Tang San's Eight Spider Lances had already pierced its vitals, this six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider was essentially incapable of resisting further.

Oscar had already dashed over to Xiao Wu's side, and while running he had already finished summoning a small sausage and a large sausage. After falling Xiao Wu's body hadn't stirred, and he hastily but cautiously supported her back.

Mouthful after mouthful of blood flowed from Xiao Wu's mouth, but what astonished Oscar was that there wasn't a trace of blood on her chest.

"Xiao Wu, Xiao Wu, how are you?"

Oscar rocked Xiao Wu gently, right now he also didn't have any means of getting Xiao Wu to eat his big sausage.

By now Flender had also reached Xiao Wu's side, and grabbing one of her hands he pressed at her wrist, slowly infusing his own spirit power into Xiao Wu.

"Yi....."

Flender's face very quickly revealed bewilderment,

“Why is it like this?”

Oscar’s heart tightened, the Shrek Seven Devils had been together so long that the feelings between each other were profound, nevermind Xiao Wu being Tang San’s little sister, their friendship alone made him extremely anxious about Xiao Wu,

“Dean, can Xiao Wu still be saved?”

A smiling expression suddenly appeared on Flender’s face, pulling up Xiao Wu he turned her over and gave her back seven quick slaps.

With a vomiting sound, Xiao Wu once again spouted out a mouthful of purple black blood. Supported in Flender’s hands, she unexpectedly slowly opened her eyes.

“What, what’s going on?”

Oscar looked dumbstruck at all this. He was unable to understand how Xiao Wu still wasn’t dead after that powerful blow from the Man Faced Demon Spider. When he first ran over he was with the expectation that Heaven didn’t listen to the plans of humans. But now it seemed that, although Xiao Wu’s complexion was pale, it was far from the expectations everyone had before.

Flender said:

“She’s alright, she only stopped breathing just now, that’s all. Xiao Wu, how do you feel?”

While speaking, he slowly infused his spirit power into Xiao Wu, helping her calm her energy and pacify the roiling qi and blood.

Xiao Wu’s voice was somewhat hoarse,

“My chest is very tight, a bit constricted. Otherwise nothing. Don’t worry, I won’t die.”

While speaking, Xiao Wu slowly stretched a hand into her chest, and under Flender and Oscar’s attentive gazes, a brightly colored flower appeared in her hand. Precisely that Yearning Heartbroken Red.

Originally, when Xiao Wu saw she was unable to dodge the Man

Faced Demon Spider's attack she curled up as far as possible. When she was finally still sent flying by a spider lance, that spider lance fortunately struck precisely the Yearning Heartbroken Red at her chest.

Before the Yearning Heartbroken Red recognized its master it couldn't be plucked with force, and after it recognized Xiao Wu it gained even more unbreakable properties, more durable than anything. Even though the Man Faced Demon Spider's attack was powerful, it still couldn't pierce this bizarre immortal treasure flower. Otherwise Xiao Wu wouldn't be flung away, but rather directly run through, and the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure in her hand would naturally also end up in the Man Faced Demon Spider's grasp.

Even Xiao Wu hadn't expected that her life would actually be saved by her tenderness keeping her from eating the fantastic immortal treasure.

Under the assistance of Flender's spirit power, Xiao Wu with difficulty roused her mind. After eating one of Oscar's big recovery sausages, her mind was immediately much better. Now she also noticed Tang San and that Man Faced Demon Spider, and instantly changed color.

"My Ge, he....."

Grandmaster and the others also finally noticed the circumstances on Xiao Wu's side, and they all understood Xiao Wu's circumstances. Grandmaster said:

"Nothing will be wrong with little San. If I'm not mistaken, right now his Eight Spider Lances are ending the life of that Man Faced Demon Spider. I only don't know if he's prepared to absorb this spirit beast's spirit ring, or if he still insists on that Pit Demon Spider."

That treacherous Pit Demon Spider had been thrown to the side by Flender, right now it lay on its back facing upward. Flender knew it was cunning and had chopped off its legs, leaving it unable to run.

Perhaps it was because Liu Erlong's dragon flame was too

terrifying, but the spirit beasts outside of the poison formation had for the most part withdrawn, only a few especially powerful ones still watched the Fragrant Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure in Xiao Wu's hand.

"Little San, Xiao Wu is alright."

Flender shouted in Tang San's direction.

Flender's judgement here was extremely correct. Hearing the two words 'Xiao Wu', Tang San slowly raised his head from the Man Faced Demon Spider's back, and everyone discovered that at some point his eyes had turned completely red. Within the red light roamed a purple radiance.

Notes

1. 1尺 = $\frac{1}{3}$ m

088 – Drain, Eight Spider Lances

Part 1

Tang San glanced at Xiao Wu sitting there anxiously watching him. His expression was blank a moment, then the bloody light in his eyes gradually withdrew, and his mind also gradually recovered to normal.

Actually, even he himself didn't know just what he did just now. Piercing the Man Faced Demon Spider with Eight Spider Lances was all something he did subconsciously while his mind was blanked out. Now, seeing Xiao Wu was still alive, Tang San's heart also subsequently came back to life. Then he noticed his current situation.

The Man Faced Demon Spider still constantly twitched below him, pulse after pulse of powerful energy entering his body via Eight Spider Lances. What made him astonished was that after this ruthless energy had circulated one turn within him, it would again be transmitted to his Eight Spider Lances to coagulate at his vertebrae, and the vertebrae and eight ribs where Eight Spider Lances attached became incomparably hot, absorbing the energy like a deep abyss.

This was the first time Tang San truly used the Eight Spider Lances' drain ability, and the target was a Man Faced Demon Spider.

Eight Spider Lances' drain ability could originally only temporarily give him an immediate energy boost, and after a short term of use it would automatically disperse. But right now the target of the drain was the same as the source of Eight Spider Lances, another Man Faced Demon Spider, and Eight Spider Lances showed an autonomous reaction; or to say that it was transforming itself.

The energy sucked out of the Man Faced Demon Spider was absorbed and transformed by Tang San's external spirit bone, becoming its own energy. This was also a chance coincidence. If Tang San hadn't already reached the fortieth rank of spirit power,

just the condition for evolving Eight Spider Lances, the energy now being absorbed from the Man Faced Demon Spider wouldn't directly shift into the external spirit bone.

External spirit bones really were too rare, that's why even Grandmaster didn't have too much research into it. Actually, the evolution of external spirit bones didn't stop because of different spirit rings. As long as a Spirit Master absorbed a new spirit ring, it would evolve together. The conditions for evolution were just the same as for obtaining a new spirit ring: the Spirit Master's strength reaching the next stage.

Under the conditions that Tang San already had a full forty ranks, and the Eight Spider Lances had absorbed the energy most suitable to it, how would it still hesitate? Right now those originally three meter long Eight Spider Lances gradually extended to four meters, and on the surface orderly rows of small barbs began to grow, exactly the same as the six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider below him. The difference was that right now Tang San's Eight Spider Lances completely appeared just as deathly pale as while draining, and under this pale white, red and white colored light roamed dizzyingly to create a dazzlingly beautiful pattern on the Eight Spider Lances.

Along with returning to consciousness, Tang San very quickly made a proper judgement about his own condition. He already inferred the reason from the circumstances of his body, and simply let the absorption continue. The benefits to his Eight Spider Lances from a similar Man Faced Demon Spider were clear and easy to see. Even though right now he didn't know in what respect it would show, he still urged the spirit power within him to speed up the absorption. Even though the Man Faced Demon Spider was immune to the similar to his own poison Tang San had, Tang San's Eight Spider Lances not only possessed the Man Faced Demon Spider's poison but also the ice and fire poisons from those two immortal treasure herbs.

The two kinds of extreme ice and fire forces rising from the Octagonal Mysterious Ice Grass and Infernal Precious Apricot wreaked havoc within its body, and further adding the destruction

from the previous dragon flame, right now this Man Faced Demon Spider didn't have the slightest bit of strength to resist and could only let Tang San keep draining. Its vitality swiftly drained away, and the eight spider legs supporting its body gradually softened, its whole body starting to lie down on the ground, its outer shell gradually turning ash grey.

Xiao Wu carefully put the Yearning Heartbroken Red back in her chest. She also had her own grievances. There was a burst of lingering fear in her heart; if it wasn't for the Yearning Heartbroken Red, perhaps she would have had to part with Tang San forever.

Liu Erlong stood at Xiao Wu's side, stroking her head. Even though she didn't say anything, the ominous energy in her eyes largely left, instead revealing a tender expression.

Xiao Wu raised her head, looking at Liu Erlong. She suddenly felt a kind of maternal brilliance from this brutish slaughtering corner. This kind of feeling was extremely cozy, and further adding her tiredness after sustaining injuries, she couldn't keep from leaning her head against Liu Erlong's soft thigh.

"Good child, with me here, I won't let anyone or anything bully you again."

Liu Erlong said softly.

Everyone couldn't keep from looking at Liu Erlong with astonished gazes. Was this still that slaughtering corner that was just brimming with killing intent and seemingly looking to massacre everything?

"Teacher Erlong....."

Xiao Wu's eyes revealed a grateful light, even so much that they had a somewhat teary brilliance. At this moment she recalled her own mother. Wouldn't her mother also frequently look at her with this kind of gaze? But, she was already gone.

"Xiao Wu, do you want to become my direct disciple?"

Liu Erlong asked.

Xiao Wu nodded without the slightest hesitation,

“I do. Teacher.”

She was clever, and while speaking she knelt and bowed to Liu Erlong as a student formally becoming apprenticed.

Liu Erlong pulled Xiao Wu from the ground, letting her lean against her chest,

“I don’t need those clichéd courtesies. Xiao Wu, teacher hasn’t married all her life, right now I still don’t have any close relatives. I don’t want you to call me Teacher. If you don’t dislike it, I would like you to call me mom.”

Hearting Liu Erlong say this, Flender to the side couldn’t keep from sadly lowering his head, and Grandmaster’s gaze was already stupid. Looking at her, for a moment all sorts of feelings welled up, lips quivering about to speak, but not a word came out.

Xiao Wu was equally shocked. Looking at Liu Erlong’s hopeful eyes, her already reddened beautiful eyes began to grow misty, and weeping held Liu Erlong tightly,

“Mom, mom.....”

‘Mom’, this word was held such a significant place in Xiao Wu’s heart. It had already been eight years since her own mother left her, how much she wanted to call out this word! Right now Liu Erlong not only gave her a feeling of a replacement mother, but at the same time Xiao Wu found the comfort of maternal love. For a moment her heart surged, and she immediately revealed her true feelings.

Liu Erlong softly caressed Xiao Wu’s long scorpion braid, a faint smile on her pretty face, teardrops uncontrollably rolling down her face.

She loved Grandmaster, but he never dared accept this taboo love. For all these years Liu Erlong’s heart had been empty, but this moment it was like she found someone to entrust with her heart, placing her hopes on her just now accepted daughter. This moment it was as if Grandmaster’s shadow over her heart rocked a little.

While Liu Erlong sensed the pure feelings Xiao Wu released, in her heart she secretly vowed that even if she had to spend her life to protect her, she would still be willing.

“Erlong, congratulations.”

Flender suppressed his dashing heart with difficulty, speaking to Liu Erlong who was smiling from ear to ear.

Liu Erlong looked at Flender, a sentimental light in her eyes,

“Boss Fu, I have a daughter. Did you know? I have a daughter.”

“Yes, I know. From hereon, you won’t be lonely, you have a daughter.”

Hearing Liu Erlong’s words, Flender couldn’t control the tears in his eyes. Didn’t he also love Liu Erlong? For Liu Erlong’s sake he had never married, for Liu Erlong and Grandmaster’s sake he had buried that love deep within his heart. But, he had never seen his beloved live happily. Could this be blamed on Grandmaster? No, it couldn’t, it could only be blamed on how fate toys with people.

At this moment, when he could feel Liu Erlong’s current mood, how couldn’t he be happy for her?

Everyone stepped forward to congratulate her one after the other, only Grandmaster stood there, unable to take even a step, his heart aching as he looked at Liu Erlong. He knew that he really owed her far too much. But between him and her it was as if a tight knot was tied, and no matter what it couldn’t be undone. He was happy that Liu Erlong had obtained a daughter, but at the same time how couldn’t he be sad for his and Liu Erlong’s fate? How much didn’t he want to hold Liu Erlong in his arms and declare his love for her? But, it was impossible. That shadow of ‘bloodline’, that haze, always hung between them.

Tang San finally finished draining, and a faint halo of light began to release from that six thousand year Man Faced Demon Spider. As long as he wished, right now he could already absorb this spirit ring.

But right now Tang San wasn’t even slightly in the mood to absorb

spirit rings. Withdrawing Eight Spider Lances, he rushed over to Xiao Wu and Liu Erlong.

“Xiao Wu, Xiao Wu.....”

There were no tears in Tang San’s eyes, but his voice was somewhat distorted, what kind of emotions would get his voice to change like this?

Xiao Wu raised her head from Liu Erlong’s bosom, and seeing Tang San almost within reach her tears flowed even more uncontrollably.

Liu Erlong sighed lightly, releasing her embrace and sending Xiao Wu towards Tang San.

Despite all the people around them, and further the few spirit beasts glaring like tigers outside, Tang San didn’t pay them any attention and fiercely spread his arms, burying Xiao Wu’s delicate body deep in his own embrace. He didn’t say anything about being sorry, but his teeth had already broken his lip. How couldn’t he regret handing the Fragrant Beautiful Silk Immortal Treasure to Xiao Wu? If not for that, how would Xiao Wu have been ambushed? This wasn’t the first time Xiao Wu had been hurt for him. Tang San hated himself, hated his inability to protect Xiao Wu.

Part 2

Liu Erlong raised her head to gaze at the sky, serenely saying:

“You must never let me hear you let her down. Otherwise, no matter whose disciple you are, or what your background is, the Giant Earth King from that day will be your example.”

Even though she didn’t mention any names, everyone knew her words were aimed at Tang San.

Softly patting Xiao Wu’s back, Tang San released his embrace, the light in his eyes suddenly turning stubborn. From the Wishful Hundred Treasure Purse he pulled out a dark green leaf and stuffed it into Xiao Wu’s mouth. At the same time he took the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure from Xiao Wu’s hand and returned it to the

Wishful Hundred Treasure Purse.

That was a Dragon Zoysia leaf with strong healing efficacy. It was also something he originally took from around the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well.

Xiao Wu swallowed the leaf, and a refreshing feeling immediately spread through her whole body, the tightness in her chest growing a lot better.

Tang San gazed at the mountain peak to the side,

“Senior Dugu’s secret cultivation grounds is in this mountain, here there’s an Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well rich in resources. If people or animals approach they will definitely be influenced by the extreme cold and hot energies, and die suddenly after a short time. But this place is also where many heavenly treasures are born. The herbs I currently possess were all taken from here. The Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well is harmful to others, but because I once took two kinds of herbs it’s instead beneficial to me. Absorbing the spirit ring here is bound to be twice the effect for half the effort. I’ll trouble everyone to wait for me here. I’ll finish absorbing the spirit ring as soon as possible. You must also by no means approach the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well, to avoid being harmed by its energies.”

Giving a simple explanation, Tang San didn’t pause. With that stubborn heart, in a few leaps he reached the side of that Pit Demon Spider. Weaving Blue Silver Grass around that sinister spirit beast, the Eight Spider Lances on his back released and brought him towards the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well with astonishing speed.

Tang San’s explanation soothed everyone. But his stubbornness was because of strength. Everything that happened just now proved that his strength was insufficient. The only thing he wanted right now was to become even stronger, gaining the strength to protect his companions and beloved.

Watching Tang San pick the Pit Demon Spider without a second thought, Xiao Wu was just about to say something but was stopped by Liu Erlong. Liu Erlong’s low voice rose next to her ear,

“This kind of man is a true man. Relying on that stubbornness he will definitely succeed. As a woman, no matter what your man decides is right or wrong, you should always support him unconditionally. When he’s right, you should be happy for him. Even if he’s wrong, let him make his mistake. At worst, follow him to make it.”

Liu Erlong’s words were nothing special, but her voice was brimming with sorrow, that sadness of the helpless.

Xiao Wu muttered:

“At worst, follow him to make it. Mom, you’re right. I should support him in all things.”

Liu Erlong’s words seemed like a wide open door for her, a realization. Xiao Wu suddenly felt a burst of relief.

But on the other side Grandmaster had an entirely different kind of feeling. Standing behind Liu Erlong and looking at her, right now Grandmaster was unable to speak a single word. He resembled nothing more than a wooden statue, standing there dumbly without speaking for a long time.

Flender looked at Grandmaster with a gloomy expression,

“Xiao Gang, come with me, I need to talk to you.”

Speaking, Flender walked to the side, followed by the expressionless Grandmaster giving people the impression of a walking corpse.

Her eyes following Grandmaster following Flender walking into the distance, Liu Erlong sighed to herself, ‘Oh, Xiao Gang, in all my life I can never love a second man. If you truly will not accept me, then I will only spend my last years like this. Fortunately, now I have a daughter. Now I somewhat understand what you feel for Tang San. At least, we can entrust our hearts to the children.’

Thinking of this, Liu Erlong suddenly had a feeling of her heart opening up to a wide panorama, her depression easing, her body much more relaxed. As the expression on her face relaxed, she seemed to become even more beautiful. Softly drawing in Xiao Wu’s

shoulder at her side, she gazed into the horizon.

.....

Tang San climbed the mountain and very quickly reached that familiar place.

On returning to the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well, he couldn't help being stunned by the scene before his eyes. The treasure ground that had originally practically been plundered by him had by now already recovered to a verdant and lush green. Even if there weren't such beautiful purples and brilliant reds as before, that full of vitality feeling made people feel comfortable.

The Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well was worthy of being called a treasure ground, those seeds Tang San left behind had already sprouted. Relying on that tenfold growth rate, after a brief half year, this place was already pregnant with life. Even though it was impossible for immortal treasure herbs to appear here again quickly, at least this was still a treasure ground. In a hundred or perhaps a few hundred years, it would restore its elegance again.

Tang San threw the Pit Demon Spider aside, the Eight Spider Lances without any restraint thrusting directly into its vitals. The vitality of this restrained sinister spirit beast constantly flowed out under the Eight Spider Lances' drain.

Tang San's way of dealing with the Pit Demon Spider was practically the same as when he killed the Man Faced Demon Spider just now, but he discovered that even though the energy being swallowed let him feel more powerful for a brief time, that energy would very quickly flow away, without being absorbed by the external spirit bone like before. He understood that this should be because the Eight Spider Lances already absorbed sufficient energy for this time's evolution. This drain ability couldn't use outside force to transform itself after all. As for the reasons, it was very simple. One was because Tang San's Mysterious Heaven Skill didn't have the method to retain this energy, and another was because the attributes of this energy was different. Not only wouldn't rashly absorbing it have any benefits, it would on the contrary be harmful.

In a moment the Pit Demon Spider was about to lose its life under the Eight Spider Lances, and the little eyes on its head were brimming with a fierce light. The corners of Tang San's mouth showed a trace of a monstrous smile, and the golden purple light in his eyes suddenly intensified, just like two sharp swords piercing deep into the Pit Demon Spider's eyes.

The Pit Demon Spider's massive body shook, and Tang San used this chance to launch the poison and drain of Eight Spider Lances at full effect.

The violent struggling gradually faded, and the Pit Demon Spider's life finally reached the end.

From what Xiao Wu said about soul shock, Tang San figured the way to resolve it was to use his Purple Demon Eye, suddenly shocking the Pit Demon Spider's soul when it was on the verge of death, making its resentment dissipate in the moment before its death. Like this, the subconscious soul shock would naturally also subsequently fade, and absorbing the spirit ring would become a lot easier.

Faint black light began to release from the Pit Demon Spider's body, condensing next to him. The spirit ring's power appearing proved that this ten thousand year spirit beast had finally lost its life.

Tang San removed his clothes and, spreading his arms, directly leapt into that yang spring hot enough to melt gold, and afterwards swam to where the two kinds of spring water flowed together.

To other people, there was nothing about these two springs that wasn't fatal, but to Tang San who had taken the Octagonal Mysterious Ice Grass and Infernal Precious Apricot, the sensation being in the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well gave him was only warm or refreshingly cool.

The two different energies simultaneously merged into him, conforming with the immortal treasure herbs within his body, quietly moving rhythmically. Tang San lay flat in the spring waters, slowly raising his right hand. Blue purple light emitted from his palm, and Blue Silver Grass issued a summons to the Pit Demon Spider's spirit

ring on the shore.

The black energy flow finally found a drainage channel, and rushed towards Tang San's right hand like a river running into the sea.

The split second that black energy came into contact with the Blue Silver Grass in Tang San's palm, intense ripples suddenly rose in the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well's waters with Tang San as the center.

Tang San choosing this place to absorb his spirit ring was the result of careful deliberation. The Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well would not only not be harmful to him thanks to the two immortal treasure herbs he took, but would on the contrary nourish him, imperceptibly forming a protective layer within his body. And because of the spring waters, the medicinal properties of the two immortal treasure herbs within him would also be completely roused, forming a second protective layer. Further adding the external spirit bone on his back, even though a ten thousand year spirit beast's spirit ring held tremendous energy, in order to harm him it would still have to pass these three protective layers first.

With Tang San's strength he could absorb a six thousand year spirit beast's spirit ring. Right now with these three safeguards, he naturally had a very large chance of success when absorbing a Pit Demon Spider that had just entered the ten thousand year level. This was also an important reason why he dared make the attempt.

Plan and practice will always be different. Right now this also went for Tang San's circumstances. Without truly trying, he would never have been able to know just how tremendous the spirit power of a ten thousand year spirit ring was.

The split second that black energy flow reached his right hand and entered his body, Tang San only felt the surrounding light dim, as if he was submerged in a tidal wave that reached the sky.

This was in no way an exaggeration. The spirit ring's energy that entered him filled every nook and corner of his body in a split second. There wasn't even any need for him to circulate it himself, that enormous energy already forced the motion.

The Pit Demon Spider's spirit power wasn't as overbearing as the Man Faced Demon Spider's, but it was brimming with a dark and cold feeling. Cold like that was different from the cold of the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well, it was a cold that evolved from the depths of the mind, a dark and cold attack on the psyche.

Part 3

Tang San's nerves seemed to have already grown numb in this cold. The three original spirit rings oscillated with frightening speeds over him, making him look like he was encased in a giant yellowish-purple cocoon.

The rank-bypassing absorption this time brought not only pain to Tang San, but also a horrifying feeling. His preparations were indeed perfect. The energy from the Ice and Fire Ying Yang Well successfully filtered the impurities out of the Pit Demon Spider spirit ring. However, the energy was still too massive for Tang San at that moment. Every attack made Tang San feel like he was tossed around ruthlessly, as if his body wasn't his anymore, and all he could do was watch detachedly. The feeling of no control was even more unbearable than the pain that came with the Man Faced Demon Spider spirit ring.

With last time's experience, Tang San knew that he couldn't do anything about it except wait and strengthen his resolve. No matter what happened to his body, he knew he couldn't panic. Or else, in a moment, he would be engulfed by the massive energy.

A black current unceasingly flowed out of the ten thousand year Pit Demon Spider, constantly getting absorbed by Tang San. The glow on his three spirit rings slowly faded, replaced with a layer of black currents. Tang San's bones continuously emitted bursts of cracking noises. The black current entered from every pore and into every energy channel.

Very soon, Tang San discovered every time the massive black energy passed through the broken open Yang Linking Meridian and Penetrating Meridian, the energy would weaken a bit, as if the two

meridians were absorbing energy as well. This feeling made Tang San instantly elated. He vaguely understood that the existence and breaking open of the eight extraordinary meridians helped specially with absorbing foreign energy.

It was a pity he only had two meridians broken through. If he had more than four broken through, the absorption of this ten thousand year spirit ring might become a piece of cake.

Gradually, the pain appeared. It was a swollen pain. From the outside, Tang San's body didn't change, but in his senses, he clearly felt his entire body swell up like a giant balloon, as if it could explode any second.

Although the black current stored up within his body was absorbed continuously by Tang San's Penetrating Meridian and the Yang Linking Meridian, the energy coming in was also getting greater and greater. Every bone and energy channel of his was tingling, as if innumerable ants were crawling over him.

The Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well and the two immortal herbs he once ate started to show their uses. After experiencing the process of Ice and Fire Alchemical Body, Tang San's energy channels had become very durable. Though the black current kept expanding his energy channels, the elasticity of his energy channels meant there were no signs of rupturing.

The Pit Demon Spider's spirit ring energy, though massive, wasn't endless. When the output of energy reached its extreme, Tang San's energy channels had been filled to a very horrifying degree. But even then, he still persevered. At that moment, no pain could waver his resolve. For himself, and also for Xiao Wu, he knew he couldn't fail.

The Pit Demon Spider's body silently shattered, the result of losing all its energy. The only thing it could do now was become fertilizer for the ground.

Pain started sliding down from its peak. Not only the Penetrating Meridian and the Yang Linking Meridian, but accompanying the circulation of spirit power, Tang San's normal energy channels started absorbing the foreign energy as well, merging it into his

Mysterious Heaven Skill.

The reason the energy within spirit rings could be absorbed is because after the energy of the spirit beast forms a spirit ring, it splits into two parts. One is pure and filtered energy to raise the spirit master's rank, letting them gain the next title, and the other big half inherits the spirit beast's characteristics. This different energy condenses into a spirit ring, becoming the spirit master's spirit ability.

Accompanying the gradual decrease in swelling, pain decreased as well. The feeling of relaxation lulled Tang San's weary mind. It was in the last part of the absorption that he slowly fell into slumber, letting the Ice and Fire Yin Yang Well nourish his body.

If anyone could see Tang San's face, they would discover his face was continuously changing colors. A moment white, a moment red, a moment black. And other than the original two yellow and one purple spirit rings, a black spirit ring was slowly appearing from the misty currents.

Perhaps Tang San wasn't the only one that had a ten thousand year spirit ring for his fourth spirit ring, but undeniably, he was one of the more gifted ones. Blue Silver Grass had evolved once again. So what if it was Blue Silver Grass? So what if it was a trash spirit? Under Tang San's effort, it still held the same power as formidable spirits of equal rank.

.....

"Xiao Gang, tell me the truth. How are you going to manage your relationship with Erlong?"

Flender stared at Grandmaster, his gaze very angry.

Grandmaster stared blankly back at Flender,

"I don't know."

"You don't know? Twenty years. Tell me, how many twenty years does a person have? A woman's youth was wasted in vain just because of your 'I don't know'. Though I'm your brother, I still really want to slap you."

Grandmaster smiled bitterly:

“Slap then, but leave me a breath to stay alive. I don’t want to make Erlong sad if I die. In reality, even I want to slap myself. This is all my fault, but Erlong bears the same amount of pain, if not more, than me.”

Looking at Grandmaster’s smile that looked worse than crying, Flender went silent. He also knew that Grandmaster didn’t do anything wrong. If he really took in Liu Erlong, then it would be incest. Grandmaster rejected Liu Erlong not because of himself, but for Erlong’s reputation. He didn’t want Erlong to take up such a heavy shame because of himself. At that time Grandmaster chose to leave because of that very reason. However, he didn’t anticipate that Liu Erlong loved him that deeply, always painfully waiting for him until now.

Flender sighed,

“Xiao Gang, is there really no way? If it keeps going like this, though you guys haven’t had incest, you guys will spend the rest of your lives in pain! You should be able to see, other than you, Erlong can’t love any other man. If you really must keep hurting her like that, then why don’t you just leave. At least, she won’t be able to see you, and she might feel better.”

Grandmaster silently nodded his head,

“I’ll leave after we go back. You’re right, I shouldn’t stay with her and let her feel this pain. Flender, it’s been this many years and I never said thank you. For our relationship, you’ve also borne pain. Sorry, Flender.”

Flender’s eyes moistened,

“What silliness are you spouting. I’m your big brother. I was before, I am now, and I will be, forever. I don’t need you to say thanks, I just want to see you happy with Erlong. Do you understand? Xiao Gang, you bastard, why are you so obstinate? Don’t tell me you can’t go live in seclusion after you join with Erlong? If you don’t tell anyone, who will know of your sibling relationship?”

Grandmaster raised his right fist and hammered his left chest,

“But, I can’t lie to my heart. I really can’t.”

Flender suddenly had a flash of intuition and thought of a possibility.

“Xiao Gang, tell me, do you love Erlong?”

Grandmaster stared unexpectedly,

“Boss Fu, are questions like that still meaningful? If I didn’t love her, then would it still be this way?”

Flender suddenly had a devious smile,

“Then good, I’m sure Erlong loves you deeply as well. Then, spiritually you guys have had incest already, I can say as much.”

“You.....”

Grandmaster was furious. That was all he was trying to protect, but when he looked at Flender’s eyes, he couldn’t think of a single rebuttal. He was right, they were in love, so spiritually they have gone off track already. If it wasn’t incest then what was it?

“Flender, I know you mean well. But, spiritual is spiritual. At least, our bodies are both still pure.”

Flender smiled slightly and said,

“As long as you admit you’ve had spiritual incest. And also, I believe, it will stay that way. Since you’ve already had incest spiritually, why don’t you merge with her spiritually? No need for real titles, just the recognition from each other. You can totally be a couple spiritually!”

Grandmaster this time really blanked out.

“Flender, I don’t get what you mean.”

Flender said exasperated,

“You’re that smart, what don’t you understand? My idea is simple. You can merge still and become a couple, just don’t change your titles. According to your current idea, as long as there isn’t a bodily

relationship, it isn't called incest. You can start at emotions and stop at motions. Then, as long as you are in love spiritually and keep pure bodies, then who can gossip about you?"

Notes

1. RAW here is seventy thousand, but let's take that as a typo.
2. Idiom: New side issues arising.
3. (蓝银囚笼) "Blue Silver Prisoner Cage"
4. (黄远) "Yellow Distance"
5. (京灵) "Capital Spirit"
6. (绛珠) "Purple-Red Pearl"

089 – Tang San's Fourth Spirit Ability

Part 1

Hearing Flender's words, Grandmaster heart beat, and he muttered:

"Is, is something like this really possible?"

Flender grandiosely said:

"Is there anything impossible? At least like this, both your hearts will feel a lot better. As long as you defend that last perimeter and keep apart every night, is there anything bad about being able to feel each other's love? Let alone cousins, even if you were siblings, so what? You are only kind to and love each other, so outsiders will only see the affection of siblings, even that conservative heart of yours wouldn't have any objections."

Listening to Flender, Grandmaster stood there completely lifeless like a sculpture. After a very long time, a sentence fiercely leapt out of Grandmaster's mouth,

"Flender, why didn't you say so long ago."

Leaving behind these words, Grandmaster sharply dashed away, dashing towards Liu Erlong as if flying. As a result of his speed, the teardrops he left in the air formed graceful strings of water.

'Erlong, Erlong, I can finally love you fairly. As long as I can love you, what need is there for being physical? Spiritual love is already enough!'

Watching Grandmaster's receding back, Flender's face showed a heartfelt smile. 'Xiao Gang, you idiot, being together rubbing heads day after day, don't tell me you can truly hold back?'

Seeing Grandmaster madly dashing over, Liu Erlong's heart couldn't

help skipping a beat.

Grandmaster rushed over in front of Liu Erlong, staring at Liu Erlong's somewhat perplexed beautiful eyes, suddenly he fiercely spread his arms and used all his strength to embrace Liu Erlong to his chest,

"Erlong, I'm sorry."

Just these three words seemed to open a sluice gate for tears. Liu Erlong just felt everything before her eyes go fuzzy, and right now she couldn't use even the slightest bit of her more than seventieth ranked spirit power. She completely softened in Grandmaster's embrace, tears flooding down.

She had already waited far, far too long for these words. Twenty years, just like Flender said, it had already been twenty years! How had she dealt with these twenty years? Even if she was even stronger on the surface, in the end she was still a woman. What woman didn't long to be cherished by her beloved? What woman didn't long for her own happiness?

Perhaps it was because this happiness really arrived too suddenly, but Liu Erlong only felt her body flutter like in a dream, as if everything was imaginary.

Flender quietly waved his hand to Zhao Wuji, Xiao Wu and the others. Everyone slowly retreated to the side, setting aside a wide space for Grandmaster and Liu Erlong alone.

Outside of the poison formation, because the Aromatic Silk Beauty Immortal Treasure disappeared, the last remaining spirit beasts also unwillingly left, and along with their disappearance, the surroundings went quiet.

"Xiao Gang, Xiao Gang, do you know how long I've waited? More than seven thousand days and nights^[1]. Do you know how I've endured? You really won't escape, you really want to be with me?"

Liu Erlong lost her voice from crying, leaning over Grandmaster's shoulder and mumbling.

Grandmaster nodded sharply,

“Erlong, I’m sorry, I swear, afterwards I will never again run from our feelings. Even if we perhaps can’t be like normal married couples, I will definitely always guard at your side and love you.”

Immediately, Grandmaster explained the idea Flender spoke about before. Liu Erlong constantly leaning against his chest listened quietly, and as she heard Grandmaster speak about having the love of a husband and wife but without the true time of a husband and wife, she understood. Grandmaster still couldn’t completely throw off that obstruction. But, after waiting for so many years, with great difficulty getting the man before her to agree not to run away, at least he agreed to stay at her side and love her, why would she force him for more?

Perhaps it was because of taking Xiao Wu as an adopted daughter had greatly influenced Liu Erlong’s emotions, but right now in her heart she only felt like letting nature take its course. Obediently within Grandmaster’s embrace, first being together with the person she loved was most important.

After an hour, Zhu Zhuqing had smoothly absorbed the Phantom Tiger’s spirit ring and returned together with Dai Mubai. It seemed that her aura had become even colder, her countenance with a bit of heroic spirit, and she was also a little bit taller. Even though she still didn’t have Xiao Wu’s height, only looking at external appearances she already felt like she had the grace of an adult beauty.

The addition of the spirit ring’s properties would no doubt cause a certain change in the Spirit Master’s body. Even though the Shrek Seven Devils were still very young, they still had at least three spirit rings, and the additional energy from the spirit rings promoted their physical growth. Their faces still possessed the innocence of childhood, but by external appearances they were already close to adults. Compared to one year ago, everyone seemed to have grown several years. As long as they didn’t tell anyone, it would perhaps be very difficult for someone to imagine that the youngest of the Shrek Seven Devils still hadn’t turned fourteen.

The next to return was Ning Rongrong, and her face wasn’t as pale

as Oscar's. Previously when Liu Erlong butchered the Unicorn Armored Beast, Oscar had kept her company at her side the whole time, covering her eyes, constantly comforting her at her side. Once Ning Rongrong began to absorb the spirit ring, Oscar had run aside to vomit. After vomiting, he cleaned up the terrifying mess Liu Erlong had made. Consequently, after Ning Rongrong absorbed the spirit ring she hadn't seen any nauseating scene, and her condition was instead much better than Oscar.

By now, of the Shrek Seven Devils only Tang San still didn't return, and everyone quietly waited within the poison formation.

Liu Erlong nestled against Grandmaster's chest, and with her eyes closed fell asleep. For twenty years she hadn't slept as smoothly as she did right now. Seeing the contented smile she revealed as she slept, Grandmaster had a kind of indescribable satisfaction in his heart.

Flender and Zhao Wuji sat on the other side speaking about something in low voices. Watching Grandmaster and Liu Erlong's current appearances, Flender's heart relaxed a lot, his face revealing a difficult to conceal smile.

Zhu Zhuqing silently sat together with Dai Mubai. Even though her expression was still cold, she didn't oppose Dai Mubai sitting practically pasted to her.

Ning Rongrong and Oscar's situation was about the same, only Ning Rongrong's expression was instead tender, taking the initiative to lean on Oscar's shoulder, talking to him about something with a smile on her face. Judging by her excited smile, she should have obtained no small benefit from the fourth spirit ring.

Fatty had consumed a lot of spirit power before and leaned alone against a big tree cultivating, condensing his spirit power. Xiao Wu wasn't far away, and though with the condition of her injuries what she should do the most was harmonize her spirit power to heal, she couldn't calm her heart.

The others had all returned, and they only lacked Tang San, how couldn't she be anxious? Sitting and leaning back, she she constantly

prayed silently for Tang San. And not just her, no matter the others' expressions, deep in the corners of their eyes was some worry. Even though Tang San himself said he had absolute certainty, but, the spirit ring level gap was really too large.

Two hours passed, and Xiao Wu told herself that absorbing such a powerful spirit ring would definitely take time.

Four hours passed, and Xiao Wu told herself that it should still be a while.

Six hours passed, and Xiao Wu constantly told herself 'hurry, hurry'.

Eight hours passed, and the sky gradually darkened. Xiao Wu stood there, looking at the distant mountain peak where Tang San disappeared, in her heart constantly shouting, 'Ge, why are you still not back?'

Ten hours passed. Night gradually deepened. Tears constantly flowed from Xiao Wu's eyes, not stopping no matter who came to console her. Right now, in her heart was only one thought, 'Ge, as long as you can return alive, even if you don't have the slightest bit of strength, even if you've become an ordinary person, or even handicapped, I'll still be happy. As long as you're alive.'

Waiting for ten hours was what kind of torture? Not just Xiao Wu, the others also became fretful. If not for Grandmaster stopping them, everyone would already have gone up the mountain to take a look.

Moonlight illuminated the ground, the shining clean brightness making long shadows of all the Shrek Academy people on the ground. Xiao Wu's heart also gradually became ice cold and despairing, the expectation in her eyes changing in the deathly stillness.

At this moment, suddenly, a clear and resonant long whistle resounded. In the quiet night, the energy in that long whistle was completely clear.

Just like a fuse had been lit, the Shrek Seven Devils simultaneously stood up. A flaming excitement ignited frantically in Xiao Wu's close to despairing eyes, and she ran recklessly with all her strength towards the mountain.

“Ge, Ge.....”

She shouted. Her voice had already become hoarse from crying, she only wanted to be the first to see that fated man.

Yes, that long whistle was Tang San's. At the mountaintop, Tang San's slender figure made a long shadow in the moonlight. He didn't rely on Eight Spider Lances to descend the mountain, but rather leapt up high, Blue Silver Grass forming an umbrella behind him to drop down the mountain.

Two silhouettes, one falling from the sky, one scrambling as if it meant her life, came closer in the radiance of that full moon, closer.....

At last, those two silhouettes met one third of the way up the mountain, two becoming one, tightly clinging to each other on the mountainside, witnessed by the bright moon.

Tang San had become taller, and his muscles also more sturdy. That warm embrace was like a perfect nest, and the moment Xiao Wu threw herself inside, she already completely lost consciousness in satisfaction.

Part 2

Even though Xiao Wu had been dosed with Oscar's recovery sausage and Tang San's Dragon Zoysia leaf, she still hadn't harmonized her breath. Ten hours of bitter waiting, if she hadn't been supported by that last conviction, she would long ago have been unable to endure.

Finally letting her awaited Tang San return, the relaxation of her taut heartstrings finally let her body bring her into unconsciousness out of self preservation.

Folding his arms around Xiao Wu's slender legs, Tang San held her close. Even though Xiao Wu hadn't had time to say anything, at this moment how couldn't he understand what Xiao Wu endured?

This night Tang San held Xiao Wu as she slept, not only didn't he

escape out of embarrassment this time, but he moreover let Xiao Wu rest at his chest all along.

This night Tang San didn't sleep, his hand from beginning to end massaging the blood flow at Xiao Wu's back.

This night nobody went to disturb them, just like nobody went to disturb Grandmaster and Liu Erlong.

To the eleven members of the Shrek Academy party, this night wasn't tranquil. From this night on, the Shrek Seven Devils truly started to transform into powers.

Even though there were twists and turns, at long last they accomplished their objective this time. Early the next morning, after everyone woke from sleep, Flender perhaps afraid of new branches growing from old knots^[2], urged everyone to leave the Sunset Forest as soon as possible.

As dean, the heaviest responsibility clearly rested on Flender's shoulders. Let alone several of these Shrek Seven Devil children having profound backgrounds, even if they didn't, as dean he still didn't want to see any one of them suffer any injuries in this dangerous place. Everyone had already obtained their spirit rings, so he would naturally be urgent to immediately leave.

After being treated by Tang San for a night, Xiao Wu had already recovered for the most part. After waking early she didn't say anything about the events of last night, but her gaze at Tang San was even more reluctant to part.

"Little San, what is your fourth spirit ability? Let us see."

While leaving the forest, Oscar bumped Tang San's shoulder with his own.

Tang San smiled slightly, saying:

"It's nothing much, it's more or less the same as the ability the Pit Demon Spider used yesterday, with some variations. You really want to see?"

“Of course. You’re the first of us to get a ten thousand year spirit ring, show us.”

Their dialogue also attracted the others’ attention, not just the Shrek Seven Devils, but Grandmaster and Flender and the others also wanted to see just what kind of spirit ability Tang San had received from that Pit Demon Spider.

“Fine.”

Tang San’s eyes revealed a trace of an evil smile. Raising his right hand, deep blue light rushed out from the palm of his hand.

A strand of Blue Silver Grass appeared in Tang San’s palm. Apparently, its thickness wasn’t much different than before, the only difference was its color: the current Blue Silver Grass had unexpectedly turned completely black, giving people a kind of stifling feeling. Most shocking was still those simultaneously appearing four spirit rings.

Two yellow, one purple, one black. Two hundred year, one thousand year, one ten thousand year, four spirit rings revolved around Tang San moving up and down. The spirit rings came out with an incorporeal pressure that immediately made Oscar take several steps back, the expression on Tang San’s body giving people a feeling of impenetrable mystery.

In a moment, that black spirit ring quietly brightened. Compared to the dazzlingly beautiful thousand year spirit ring, the feeling the ten thousand year spirit ring gave was grave and reserved.

Without the slightest warning, sixteen strands of pitch black Blue Silver Grass suddenly rushed out from the ground around Oscar, converging above his head to form a prisoner cage.

As a result of not having made any energy fluctuations, Oscar basically didn’t have any thought of dodging, and further adding the speed with which these sixteen strands of Blue Silver Grass appeared, by the time he reacted this Blue Silver Grass pen was already strong like refined steel.

“This is my fourth spirit ability. Born from the Pit Demon Spider’s

spiderweb prisoner cage, since my cage uses Blue Silver Grass, I call it Blue Silver Prison^[3].”

Dai Mubai raised his hand to flick that pitch black Blue Silver Grass, causing a sonorous clang. The soft Blue Silver Grass unexpectedly became as solid as steel under the effect of the spirit ability.

Dai Mubai drew a deep breath and released his own spirit with a great roar. White light surging from his right fist, condensed spirit power bombarding one of the sixteen strands of Blue Silver Grass.

With a peng sound, that strand of Blue Silver Grass immediately showed a fine crack, and under Dai Mubai’s next blow it shattered, becoming faint black light and disappearing.

Ma Hongjun frowned:

“This seems very ordinary, apparently it’s not as durable as the Spider Web Restraint. Third brother, is this all there is to a ten thousand year spirit ability?”

“Is that so?”

Tang San’s eyes revealed a strange smile. Black light once again sprung up around him, and in practically a split second, besides he and Xiao Wu, black light appeared underfoot of even Flender, Liu Erlong, Grandmaster and Zhao Wuji. In just the blink of an eye, another eight Blue Silver Prisons appeared, trapping everyone inside.

Even powers like Flender and Liu Erlong couldn’t dodge when faced with the completely warningless suddenly appearing black Blue Silver Grass, and were instantly trapped. Flender couldn’t keep his expression from changing and involuntarily cried out:

“It’s a crowd control ability. But this isn’t something a control system Spirit Master under the fiftieth rank can possess?”

The capability to control the battlefield with poison the poison Spirit Master Dugu Yan originally showed could also be called a crowd control ability, but compared to the Blue Silver Prison Tang San used, it was practically comparing heaven to underground. What was true

crowd control? Only leaving the opponent completely without chance of dodging, instantly locking down each opponent, this could be called crowd control.

One Blue Silver Prison might not count for much when a forty something ranked power attack system Spirit Master like Dai Mubai could rely on his strength to break it. But, breaking through the cage required time, and that time was enough to let the control system Spirit Master's companions cause a great deal of trouble. Even more, this ten thousand year spirit ability of Tang San's was a crowd control ability in the true sense of the word. Perhaps its power wasn't as awesome as the Spider Web Restraint, and also didn't have the adherence and intense poison, but, the spirit power consumed by each Blue Silver Prison was only a tenth of that of the Spider Web Restraint.

Tang San waved his right hand, and the light of the fourth spirit ring vanished. All the black Blue Silver Grass instantly entered the ground and disappeared unseen, as if they had never been.

In this time's spirit beast hunt, the one with the greatest bounty was no doubt Tang San. Not only did he obtain this ideal crowd control ability, but at the same time his external spirit bone Eight Spider Lances also obtained its ideal evolution. Relying on a lowest end spirit, not only didn't he fall behind his companions, but his strength even kept slightly ahead of the Shrek Seven Devils.

Fatty now also came to himself,

"Third brother, can this ability of yours coordinate with mine?"

Tang San smiled:

"Of course it can. Blue Silver Prison can be considered a first move control ability, while that Phoenix Cry Heaven Strike of yours contains a finishing move control ability. As long as they can be used flexibly, they can naturally display our most powerful attack power."

Flender somewhat pondering said:

"I think, giving them the assignment to become champions was a bit easy. Even as the founder of Shrek Academy, I feel the power of this

group of little monsters is a bit abnormal.”

Liu Erlong let a laugh escape, saying:

“Come on, you’re sighing too hard. Are you still bragging about yourself?”

Flender feigned anger:

“Well, Erlong. I just helped you fulfill your wishes and you at once answer me like that. You’re lucky your old brother is good to you.”

Liu Erlong smiled without speaking, hugging Grandmaster’s arm tightly.

After obtaining the fourth spirit abilities, the Shrek Seven Devils’ strength had once again made a qualitative leap.

Evil Eye White Tiger Dai Mubai, forty fourth rank power attack system Battle Spirit Ancestor, two yellow and two purple spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: White Tiger Barrier, White Tiger Light Wave, White Tiger Vajra Transformation, White Tiger Meteor Shower.

Sausage Monopoly Oscar, forty first rank food system Tool Spirit Ancestor, two yellow and two purple spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: Big Recovery Sausage, Small Detoxifying Sausage, Swift Flight Mushroom Sausage, Stimulating Pink Sausage.

Thousand Hands Asura Tang San, forty first ranked control system Battle Spirit Ancestor, two yellow, one purple and one black spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: Binding, Parasite, Spider Web Restraint, Blue Silver Prison.

Evil Fire Phoenix Ma Hongjun, forty first ranked power attack system Battle Spirit Ancestor, two yellow and two purple spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: Phoenix Fire Wire, Bathing Fire Phoenix, Phoenix Ascension, Phoenix Cry Sky Strike.

Soft Boned Demon Rabbit Xiao Wu, thirty seventh ranked power attack system Battle Spirit Elder, two yellow and one purple spirit

rings, three spirit abilities separately were: Waist Bow, Demon Confusion, Teleportation.

Seven Treasure Glazed Tile Ning Rongrong, forty first ranked auxiliary system Tool Spirit Ancestor, two yellow and two purple spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: Strength Amplification, Agility Amplification, Spirit Power Amplification, Defense Amplification.

Hell Civet Zhu Zhuqing, forty first ranked agility attack system Spirit Ancestor, two yellow and two purple spirit rings, four great spirit abilities separately were: Hell Thrust, Hell Hundred Claws, Hell Decapitation, Hell Shadow Doppelgänger.

Besides Xiao Wu, the other six had completely climbed the fortieth rank threshold. Dai Mubai had even reached a terrifying forty fourth ranked spirit power at the age of seventeen.

There were no accidents on the return trip, and the party of eleven smoothly returned to Shrek Academy. By now there were only five days until the start of the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament preliminaries.

Grandmaster gave the Shrek Seven Devils one day of rest, and early the next morning had them gather in the forest behind the teaching block for their final training.

Part 3

What was worth mentioning was, to prevent Shrek's Seven Devils from having not enough people due to injuries in future battles, Tai Long, who was rank thirty-eight and had the Vigorous Orangutan Spirit, was temporarily recruited into the team. Others that were recruited were three rank thirty five advanced class Spirit Masters as reserve team members for the Shrek Seven Devils.

The latter four recruits, other than Tai Long, were each:

Rank thirty five power attack system Battle Spirit Elder, Huang Yuan^[4], Male, Spirit: Lone Wolf. Spirit Rings: Two yellow one purple.

Rank thirty five agility attack system Battle Spirit Elder, Jing Ling^[5], Male, Spirit: Skeleton. Spirit Rings: Two yellow one purple

Rank thirty five healing system Tool Spirit Master, Jiang Zhu^[6], Female, Spirit: Healing Scepter. Spirit Rings: Two yellow one purple

Before the Shrek Seven Devils came, or perhaps before the academy became Shrek Academy, Tai Long and those three were all part of the main force for this year's Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament, educated by Liu Er Long herself, the elites of the academy. If not for this tournament, with their capabilities, they could've graduated ages ago.

As for being Shrek Seven Devil's substitutes, none of them had any complaints. After seeing Tang San destroying rank fifty eight Strength Type Spirit King Tai Nuo, who would have complaints about them? Even though the youngest of the four, Jiang Zhu, was already nineteen.

Grandmaster, Flender, and Liu Er Long, after discussing, recruited those four into the academy team. Their plan was simple, to switch out the Shrek Seven Devils sometimes in the easier battles to lessen their exhaustion.

The Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament wasn't only a fight between Spirit Master Academies. It is a major event in the entire Spirit Master world. From the preliminaries, to the promotion stage, and to the Final Stage, it would be three months in total. In this long period of time, who could say the Shrek Seven Devils wouldn't accidentally get hurt and lose the ability to continue?

Because there had to be at least seven spirit master's cooperating, every match the academy had to send at least seven people up, having a certain number of hands for the roster was essential.

"Everyone sit."

Grandmaster waved his hand, gesturing for everyone to sit where they were. Possibly because of the solving of his dilemma, Grandmaster's face was rosier than normal.

The Shrek Seven Devils and the four substitutes all sat in a circle

around Grandmaster, quietly listening to his explanations.

“In a few more days, The Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Tournament will commence. I will tell you the rules today.”

As he spoke, he kicked the drowsy Ma Hongjun’s butt. He didn’t look at him and continued:

“Don’t object, rules are rules, and they might be exploited for advantage. Strength is important in the competition, but you must also clearly understand the rules. Otherwise, it’s very possible that others might use them against you.”

After getting kicked by Grandmaster, Fatty stuck his tongue out and didn’t dare to be neglectful anymore. His little eyes brightened just as he saw Jiang Zhu on the opposite side of him.

Jiang Zhu, nineteen years old, was a few years older than the Shrek Seven Devils. One meter sixty five tall, her maroon hair was very unique. A soft look, though not as eye-catching as Zhu Zhuqing, Xiao Wu, and Ning Rongrong, but was definitely still a beauty. What most attracted Fatty’s eyes was her ripe body. Everywhere that should be round wasn’t flat. Fatty didn’t notice before, but now he instantly had a problem sitting still.

Though he solved his evil fire problems, he had been to the brothels already and was fully aware of the birds and the bees; he was more knowledgeable about it than some adults. Yet in Shrek Seven Devils, he was the only one by himself. The rest were all couples, so how could Fatty not be envious?

Jiang Zhu naturally noticed Ma Hongjun looking at her. She blinked her eyes and smiled warmly, examining the only one of Shrek’s Seven Devils with an abnormal body type.

The Academy’s students didn’t have much time with Shrek’s Seven Devils, so in Jiang Zhu’s eyes, the only fourteen Ma Hongjun was but a chubby little brother, with a cute big head and ears. How would she know Fatty’s brain was full of vulgar thoughts. Grandmaster continued:

“The Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament

is hosted by Heaven Dou and Star Luo Empires' royal families, assisted by Spirit Hall. It is the greatest Spirit Fight and the participants are only weaker than the Spirit Hall elite selection. In the rules, there are a few that still need obeying. First of all, all participants must be under twenty five and every team must ensure there are seven every match. Second, the matches are only friendly interactions, so try to refrain from hurting or crippling your opponents. Deaths are definitely not allowed, and once it happens, not only does the school have to pay for the losses, but they will also be disqualified."

"Grandmaster, this one might not be appropriate."

Dai Mubai rose his hand to interrupt Grandmaster.

"Spirit abilities have no eyes, what if we accidentally kill people? If the two sides are of similar strength, fighting all out will inevitably cause incidents."

Grandmaster looked towards Dai Mubai and said solemnly:

"What you say is correct. But, you need to know that the reason the two empires are hosting this tournament is not to let all the schools fight for a victory, but to find the best talented people to recruit. Including Spirit Palace and the kingdoms within the two empires, they all have similar thoughts. Those that can represent Advanced Spirit Master Academies are all people of outstanding talent as well as the future of the Spirit Master World. Nurturing a spirit master is very difficult, and the amount of spirit masters in the entire continent was never more than a million. Prohibiting killing might be a restriction, but it is also protection for you kids. From my perspective, this rule is very correct."

Dai Mubai still disapproved of the rule. Though he didn't like killing, he hated a sense of restriction when fighting even more.

Grandmaster continued:

"Other than these two strict rules, the others are standard. Everything is based on fairness. For example: During the match, no using food or medicine created by non participating spirit masters.

Only Food or Healing System Spirit Masters on the stage can replenish their teammates. In other words, if you want to obtain supplements on the stage, then a Support Type Spirit Master must take up one stop. This is to prevent teams with Food System Spirit Masters from cheating. Also, you can't use weapons other than your own spirit. Because of this, Tang San, the hidden weapons you make can't be used in this tournament. You must remember this, or else we will be disqualified instantly."

Getting to there, Grandmaster paused.

"The main rules are these. If anything else needs to be mentioned, I will tell you during the tournament. Now, let's talk about the system of this tournament."

While he was talking, Grandmaster took a wooden stick he prepared and drew two connecting circles in the ground.

"These two circles represent the two empires." He then drew a small circle that touched both large circles. "This one represents the Spirit Palace."

"Within the two empires, there are almost a hundred Advanced Spirit Master Academies. Every academy has a chance to participate, and the two empires' official Advanced Spirit Master Academies will have two slots. For example, Heaven Dou Empire has Heaven Dou Imperial Academy. These two official teams will be split into a main team and a secondary team. The main team will be advanced to the finals phase instantly, which is a guarantee for the two royal families. The secondary team will be with everyone else, participating in the preliminaries."

Grandmaster then drew a few circles inside the two large circles.

"The preliminaries are split into areas. Within, with Heaven Dou City as the center, within Heaven Dou Empire's bounds, all that do not belong to a kingdom or dukedom will come to this area for the preliminaries. All the academies of the kingdoms and dukedoms will be matched based on their areas. Heaven Dou Empire has four kingdoms and one dukedom. In other words, counting the Heaven Dou Area, there will be six preliminary areas. Other than the one

team that is in the finals already, these six areas will be fighting over fifteen spots. Because our area has a lot of academies and is also directly subordinate to the empire, there will be five spots to fight over. Every other area has two spots. Star Luo Empire is almost identical to Heaven Dou Empire.”

“Which means, through the preliminaries, the amount of teams that go to the next stage will be thirty. These thirty teams will all participate in the finals. But before participating, there will be a promotion stage. This promotion stage is a ranking of the thirty teams to decide the order of matches in the finals.”

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Part 1

“The qualifying phase of the tournament has a different format from the promotional phase. The combat format of the qualifying phase is what you are all most familiar with: seven member team battles. It is a round robin competition where the five teams with the most victories will proceed to the promotional phase. The format of the promotional phase of the tournament is special. The competing teams are still limited to seven members but the battles are now one-on-one singles with the victorious team member staying on the field to face successive members of the opposing team, until the students on one side have all lost.”

“As a result, the qualifying phase can be said to demonstrate the combat prowess of the team as a whole while the promotional phase is used as a stage to demonstrate each member’s individual prowess. As to the reason for having a promotional phase; it’s for the two empires and the Spirit Hall to more easily recognize spectacular talents within the competing teams.”

“The finals phase has thirty three teams competing, and the format is random draw bracket single-round elimination.”

“Grandmaster, please wait a moment”

Oscar interrupted, as he asked with some confusion,

“Grandmaster, did you not just say that the two empires both have one seeded team and fifteen normal teams that advances through the qualifying and promotional phases? If so, that adds up to thirty two teams competing in the finals, where does the 33rd comes from?”

Grandmaster smiled slightly, “I had forgotten to mention it; the finals

doesn't have two seeded teams but three. The third seed comes from the Spirit Hall's own personal team, and this team can be said to have the highest potential for victory. Although the Spirit Hall isn't an advanced Spirit Master academy, it most definitely has its own organization that trains their younger spirit masters. In the previous three advanced spirit master championships, other than Star Luo Empire winning once, the other two victories were all taken by the Spirit Hall teams. They will also be your most powerful competitors in this tournament. From my experiences, the team Spirit Hall is sending out this time will definitely be stronger than the Emperor Team you met before."

The Shrek Seven Devils looked at each other, but what they saw in each other's eyes was not worry but burning curiosity and excitement.

After experiencing so much combat in the Spirit Area and even becoming a never-before-seen rank thirty gold spirit fighting team, what they wanted most now was exactly a powerful opponent. Without a powerful opponent, how else would they be able to better hone their abilities?

"The Promotional Phase will decide the ranking of each empire's teams separately, from rank one to fifteen. The benefits of this ranking will become apparent in the finals phase. The finals phase's format is single-round elimination. Each round, there will be a few teams that draw empty brackets. The first round, the teams with empty brackets will be the three seeds; the other thirty teams will face off against one another with the fifteen winning teams attending the next round of battles. In the second round, including the three seed teams, there will be eighteen teams left. This time, from the remaining teams, the two teams that ranked first in the promotional phase will face an empty bracket. The other sixteen teams will face off with the eight winning ones progressing to the third round. The third round will have ten teams in total with again, the two highest ranking ones drawing blank brackets. Those that have already drawn blank brackets will not get another chance. After the third round, the remaining teams should be the six strongest teams of the championship. This time, there will be no empty brackets. The fourth

round will still rely on blind ballot to decide the opposing teams with the winning ones being the final three teams. In order to ensure fairness in the placement of the last three teams, the teams must undergo both group and individual elimination battles.”

“First of all is the individual elimination contest, similar to the format of the promotional phase. The three teams will proceed in alternating order. Each team will send out one member, the first two will face off against each other with the winner facing the member from the third team, until the two of the teams run out of members. The team of the winner will direct head to the finals. The two losing team will then face off in group combat to compete for the chance at the finals. The last two teams at the finals will then compete for the champion title in the final fight of the championship.”

After listening to Grandmaster’s long explanation, Ma Hongjun was unable to hold back,

“Grandmaster, why is this competition so complicated? Just listening is making me dizzy.”

Dai Mubai snapped,

“What’s there to be confused about? It doesn’t matter what kind of rules there are, as long as we win every single battle, at the end won’t we be the champions?”

Grandmaster slightly nodded,

“Mubai’s right. You should become familiar with the different phases of the championship, but in the face of absolute strength, it’s not the most important. During the tournament, I will remind you of the specific rules and help you analyze your opponents. Now everyone stand up. For these last couple of days, what you need to do is to practise mock combat. Oh, right. There’s something I must remind you, for the Heaven Dou division qualifying phase, you seven little monster can only have three people participating in battles at any one time. Furthermore, Rongrong will absolutely never appear during the qualifying phase. I will have a special training regimen for her during this time.”

“Ah? Only three?”

Even Tang San couldn't help but be shocked.

Grandmaster replied with a stern look,

“What? You have something to complain about? During the qualifying phase, the team will consist of Tai Long, Huang Yuan^[1], Jing Ling^[2] and Jiang Zhu^[3] four people. The remaining three will be for you to decide amongst yourselves with Rongrong being the exception.”

Tang San probed:

“Teacher, is this to hide our power? But, what if we lose?”

Grandmaster calmly said:

“What? Do you not even have this much confidence? Your true opponents are in the promotional and Finals phases, the qualifying phase will definitely not pose any problem. If you were to expose the entirety of your strengths now for everyone to see, then won't it be much harder for you to achieve victory later?”

Tang San thought deeply about Grandmaster's words and only after exchanging a glance with Dai Mubai, nodded his head,

“Teacher, I understand.”

Grandmaster clapped the shoulder of disciple he was proud of and said,

“I knew you would understand. The actual combat tactics on the field will be for you to decide. The team members that will participate is also up to you. All I can advise you is that, during the qualifying phase, the less you Shrek Seven Devils show yourselves, the better. In the finals phase, the opponents you will face will be even stronger than what you can imagine. You have only one goal. For this goal, give it your all.”

In the following few days, the Shrek Academy's team members participating in this championship underwent combat training under the directions of Grandmaster. Especially for the four new additions, each day was passed under Grandmaster's millstone.

Trying to create a coherent team of Spirit Masters was not an easy goal to reach, but if in this team, there was an exceptional control system spirit master, then everything would become much simpler. Tang San doubtlessly could take on such a role, and under his deployment and leadership, the four new members slowly became familiar with the Shrek Seven Devils' fighting methods. At the same time, Tang San also confirmed the members that will participate in the qualifying phase. The main force would consist of four of the Shrek Seven Monsters.

Although the qualifying phase was not very important, they still needed to guarantee a spot for advancement. Therefore Tang San decided that the roster would be, including himself who had to appear, Evil Eye White Tiger Dai Mubai, who possessed the strongest spirit power, food system Spirit Master Big Sausage Uncle Oscar, as well as close quarters power attack system Spirit Master Xiao Wu. Fatty, Zhu Zhuqing and Ning Rongrong would stay hidden. All preparation had been finished.

Three days later, Heaven Dou Empire capital, Heaven Dou City.

Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament, Heaven Dou division opening commemoration was being hosted by Heaven Dou City in a magnificent ceremony.

Being the largest spirit master competition within the spirit master world, this championship did not only attract the attention of Spirit Masters. From the imperial families, nobilities to the commoners, every single citizen in Heaven Dou City saw this competition as their biggest festival. The opening ceremony would be held in the Heaven Dou Grand Spirit Arena. As early as a month ago, the tickets to the ceremony had already been completely sold out. The price for these tickets was the same as the ones to enter the central arena ring of the Spirit Arena.

As the main competition arena of the Heaven Dou Division, the Heaven Dou Grand Spirit Arena had already stopped all arena battles a month beforehand to undergo interior remodelling. All sub arenas within the Spirit Arena had been merged with the central arena ring to form a massive stadium for the competition.

Excluding the VIP section which remained in the entire north side of the area, the remodelled Spirit Area could now hold eighty thousand spectators at the same time. The revenue from the ticket sales was large, but so was the amount the Spirit Arena had spent.

For the next period of time, all matches of the qualifying phase in the Heaven Dou Division would take place here.

In the early twilight before the sun had yet to rise from the east, the newly remodelled Heaven Dou Spirit Arena had already attracted an enormous crowd of spectators. Having arrived so early, these audience members would obviously not be given early access to the arena, because each ticket had its own designated seating. What these people were here for on the first day of the opening ceremony, was to have a closer look at the young spirit masters attending this competition.

Among the crowd, there were numerous young maidens with hopeful gazes. It was just as Grandmaster had said before, the number of Spirit Masters on the entire continent added together was less than six figures. The students that could represent their advanced academies and attend this important competition were even more the cream of the crop. Furthermore, with the age restriction of twenty five, they were without a doubt the best targets for these girls with romance in their hearts. If they were able to marry a powerful spirit master, fame and fortune would doubtlessly follow.

Even some of nobles who had bought tickets for the VIP area were also gathered outside. For the nobility, scouting spirit masters was always exciting, never boring.

The Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament was by its nature a cradle for talented people. Let alone those that achieved favourable results in this competition, even the students that were just participating would become objects of desire for nobles and powerful clans.

Part 2

Right now, with Heaven Dou Great Arena as its heart, practically a third of Heaven Dou City was a scene of an unbroken sea of people. Starting from several days ago, every level inn in Heaven Dou City was filled. The population of the city had gone up by practically fifty percent. This showed the attraction the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament had on people.

For the sake of this tournament, Heaven Dou City had been transferred a whole five thousand city guardsmen to keep order, to as far as possible prevent disturbances.

“Wah, so much people!”

Ning Rongrong couldn't keep from crying out in surprise. Looking east or looking west, this was the first time she had seen such an amount of people.

Oscar served as flower guarding emissary, guarding at Ning Rongrong's side, as far as possible keeping his head down, not letting other people see his appearance.

It wasn't just Oscar, besides a few dazzled girls, whether it was the Shrek Seven Devils or the several substitutes, right now they all kept their heads down. Because, the clothing they wore really made them blush from shame.

The official Shrek Academy uniform wasn't any common green, but rather a color somewhere between yellow and green. Using Dai Mubai's words to describe it: snot green.

For the sake of this Academy tournament, dean Flender had these uniforms specially made according to his strange sense of aesthetics. The fabric was actually pretty good, and it was also comfortable. But besides the snot green, each person's chest was also practically covered by a large Shrek monster design, and the color of this design was a bright emerald green.

This still wasn't much; most out of the ordinary was on each person's back, several big words embroidered in red silk: Looking for advertisers.

Below these big words was still a row of smaller ones: For

advertising fees please call on Shrek Academy's dean, mister Flender, for a personal meeting.

Because of this competition uniform, the Shrek Seven Devils had once resisted violently, but in the end they were still suppressed by Flender's abuse of authority. In front of everyone's supreme efforts, Flender just expressed reluctance. If they truly had sponsors, then out of the whole advertisement income they could take out one third to pay for their competing team members, and the rest set apart for the Academy's construction funds.

To Dai Mubai, Zhu Zhuqing and Tang San, this sum of money might not be anything. But to the others, money was still very important. Even more, Tang San and the others had all seen the original circumstances of the Shrek Academy. Having now with great difficulty found the chance to earn money, they still couldn't too easily contradict Flender. Even though this dean was a bit treacherous and sly, it really hadn't been easy for him to support the Academy for all these years.

Of course, the Shrek Seven Devils also once asked Grandmaster for help, but his reply was also extremely out of the ordinary. Grandmaster told them that even though this uniform was a bit unsightly, it was also a kind of practice for their inner qualities. If they could keep from changing under everyone's jeers and laughter, then their psychological qualities would also have reached a certain degree.

The Shrek Seven Devils secretly whispered that this was clearly to toughen the thickness of their face.

Grandmaster used his position as Academy representative to along with Flender refuse to wear such a uniform, and they only had a small and very inconspicuous Shrek design on their left lapels.

It was precisely because of this unusual attire that just as Tang San and the others were about to enter the crowd, they immediately attracted special attention.

"What academy is that? Heavens, did they just crawl out from a latrine?"

“I’m dying from laughing, that green monster design on their chests is really too adorable. Why do the ears look like trumpets.”

“Look, look, on their backs they’re still recruiting some advertising? Is an advanced Spirit Master academy like this real? Can they still participate in the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament? It’s too funny. The really are all kinds of birds in the woods.”

Be quiet, they’re still Spirit Masters. Only, I expect they’re only going through the motions, look at that fatty, it’s like he’s growing into a ball.”

If there was a crack in the ground right now, then the eleven Shrek Academy students would perhaps be pushing each other aside to be first to squeeze into it. Even if they had a measure of mental preparation, they still hadn’t expected there would be so many people outside the Great Spirit Arena. It was like they were on display. Moreover it was the model of negative attention.

Unable to change their appearance, Tang San was the first to pull out the Shrek mask they originally brought when participating at the Spirit Arena tournament, and the Shrek Seven Devils hastily copied him one by one. The pitiful late members with Tai Long didn’t have such equipment, and could only cover their faces with their hands, like that getting more and more embarrassed.

Flender walked forward with an ‘I don’t know these people behind me’ appearance, and bore into the crowd with big steps, the speed of Grandmaster and Liu Erlong following behind him not a bit slower.

Tang San finally understood what was meant by ‘wanting to cry but lacking tears’. Right now, if he could choose to instead confront a fiftieth ranked Spirit Master team, he still wouldn’t choose to be put on display here.

Fortunately there were very many teams that came to participate in the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament, representing close to thirty academies, and the majority of the crowd’s interest was still attracted by those groups, allowing the Shrek party to squeeze into the Heaven Dou Great Spirit Arena after

their hardships.

All the teams that came to participate were for the most part dressed bright and neat. Even though they were all dressed in their academy uniforms, none were as out of the ordinary as the Shrek Academy. Dressed up in those beautiful golden, silver, red, white, with all sorts of decorations, designs and academy insignia uniforms, each and every one of the young Spirit Masters stepped forward to enter the Great Spirit Arena like heroes with their heads held high. With imposing appearance and displaying bravery, abundantly looking disdainfully at the world.

Having broken into the Heaven Dou Great Spirit Arena, the Shrek Academy party all loosed a breath. Tang San and Dai Mubai looked face to face, their eyes full of helplessness.

“When leaving the tournament, no matter what you say I won’t wear this. Too damaging to my heroic image.”

Ma Hongjun took off the mask from his face and complained. This tournament didn’t permit covering their faces, and right now everyone had the urge to immediately leave this place because of their clothes. Participating when attired like this was really too embarrassing.

Fortunately, today was the opening ceremony, and the first day of the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament. Apart from the opening ceremony there would only be one match. The Heaven Dou Imperial Academy secondary team would conduct the first match of the round robin tournament against the first opponent they drew. It could also be considered to be a spirit fight with something of a show nature. Otherwise, with only the opening ceremonies it clearly couldn’t attract the interest of the audience.

This Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament had a cash prize, and moreover unusually direct. Each preselection match victory would award five hundred gold spirit coins, and entering the promotion competition would reward an additional three thousand gold spirit coins. If they could enter the finals, Heaven Dou Empire would not only award the title of baron, but would also reward each member of the team one thousand gold spirit coins,

regardless of whether they were regular or reserve members. As for the bonus of the last finals, it would be even higher.

For the sake of the advertisements on the back of the Shrek Seven Devils, Flender had already renounced this income. In other words, any reward would be returned to the team members.

Tang San comforting said:

“Anyway, the odds of us appearing on stage today is low. After returning we’ll talk it over with dean Flender again, and no matter what is said we won’t wear these clothes tomorrow. WE have to at least drop the letters on the back.”

Right now, the Shrek Academy party stood in a specially arranged rest area for competing academies within the main arena. They weren’t the first to enter, but also weren’t the last here. Within the expansive rest area were more than a thousand seats, split into sections, to be used for the Spirit Master academies to rest and wait.

Even though there wasn’t as many people here as outside, along with the advanced Spirit Master academy participant teams entering, the Shrek Academy group still became the focal point. Despite already having done their utmost to find a corner, they still attracted a lot of attention.

But the inner qualities of Spirit Masters would always be a lot higher than that of ordinary people, and although there was no lack of despising gazes and disdainful expressions, there weren’t a lot of comments. Each academy’s team members were gathered together by each team’s teacher, waiting for the opening ceremony. At the same time, each Academy also had a teacher do the final sign up registry confirmation work. Once the competing students were properly registered, thereafter in the tournament, they couldn’t again add or change members.

Not long after, Flender came waltzing back,

“Yi, what are you doing running into a corner like this?”

Seeing the students’ unkind gazes, Flender coughed somewhat

awkwardly,

“En, then we’ll be here. The signup formalities have already been completed, and in a moment you will enter for the opening ceremonies. Each and every one of you be a bit spirited, don’t lose face for our Shrek Academy. You must be the champion team.”

“Champion? Toads still want to be champions?”

At this moment, a disharmonious voice came from the side.

The Shrek Academy students nursed a bellyful of anger, and suddenly hearing this voice they immediately turned sharply to look in its direction.

That was an academy team standing close to them. Speaking of, by true coincidence, among this team were some the Shrek Seven Devils recognized. It was precisely the ones they encountered when they originally left for the Star Dou Great Forest to get their third spirit rings: students from Blue Sunshine Academy^[4].

They still had those moon white Spirit Master robes, the two words ‘Blue Sunshine’ embroidered within a circle on their shoulders in blue-green. What was different was that this time their team uniforms all had silver decorations, appearing even more dazzling than before.

Part 3

Right now, among the Shrek Seven Devils only Fatty had taken off his mask, and among the Blue Sunshine Academy’s ten plus students there were only two that originally met them, and therefore they didn’t recognize these people.

“Who did you say is a toad?”

The first to leap up was Tai Long.

“The ones wearing snot green uniforms is who. En, I think you all still lack a green hat. Adding that, it would truly be perfect.”

The speaker was a youth appearing twenty years old, a person Tang

San and the others had never seen before, with a somewhat pale face, slim build, and a pair of small eyes filled with disdain and contempt.

“I’ll show you who is a toad.”

Tai Long directly swung his fist. He never had a good temper, and being directly taunted, how could he endure?

“Tai Long, come back.”

Tang San’s voice rose. Just about to swing, Tai Long had no choice but to halt in midair, turning his head to look at Tang San,

“Young master San, I.....”

Tang San spoke calmly:

“What use is talking big, if you want to fight, wait until we’re on the stage. Don’t you know it’s prohibited for Spirit Master academies to fight each other here? This is some group of little white dogs, don’t they have an owner, take them away quickly.”

Tang San’s expression was very serene under his mask, at most he only looked a bit impatient, not even facing the Blue Sunshine Academy people as he spoke.

“Who are you calling a dog?”

The Blue Sunshine Academy people didn’t have much self restraint, and surrounded them in an instant, each and every one with threatening manners. Apparently they really had a bit of strength.

Dai Mubai with perfect cooperation said:

“The ones barking are the dogs. A group of masterless strays, even. Little San, even though we can’t fight here, self defense is always alright. I don’t mind sending these little white dogs back home.”

The Blue Sunshine Academy people were angry, but at this moment a forceful voice echoed,

“What are you doing?”

On hearing this voice, the Blue Sunshine Academy students' complexion immediately turned ingratiating, and hastily separated. A sixty year old man came walking up from behind them, also wearing moon white Spirit Master attire, only his embroidery was golden.

Flender had always kept aside as a cool eyed bystander, but on seeing this person he couldn't keep the expression in his eyes from pulsing.

Ma Hongjun whistled,

"Oh, the little white dogs' owner came. Quickly take away these dogs of yours. They're noisy when left here. It wouldn't be good if they happened to piss in a public space."

Against the Shrek Academy group's expectations, that old man only swept his gaze across Ma Hongjun without flaring up, but on the contrary shouting in a deep voice:

"Go."

Finished speaking, he turned and headed towards the other side of the rest area. The Blue Sunshine Academy students all looked at each other, but none dared say anything and they obediently followed him away.

Fatty laughed loudly, saying:

"The owner is sure enough different, really obedient."

"Fine, Fatty."

Flender glared at Ma Hongjun. The latter shut his mouth, but there was a somewhat unreconciled light in his eyes.

Flender's brows furrowed, saying:

"I didn't expect that old fellow to actually have gone to Blue Sunshine Academy. It seems that the quality of the Blue Sunshine Academy's students in this competition should be pretty good. Don't tell me that impetuosity just now was an act?"

Ma Hongjun was the closest to Flender and hastily asked:

“Teacher, who was that old man just now? You know him?”

Flender nodded:

“That old man is called Shi Nian^[5], his spirit is extremely unusual. It’s a kind of special intangible spirit, capable of causing all kinds of illusions, losing people inside. His current strength should be enough to disable and kill people within the illusions. We call his spirit Cruel Dream^[6]. This old fellow is extremely sinister, don’t just look at his calm and collected surface, it’s actually the corners of the eyes that will tell. You must all be a bit careful for me. When I knew him his spirit power was more than sixtieth rank, by now it might have reached more than the seventieth.”

Illusions? Was there still such a spirit? The Shrek Seven Devils couldn’t help being alarmed, in their minds reflecting on how it could be withstood, but for the most part they were at a loss.

Flender said:

“His spirit is extremely difficult to deal with, even Spirit Masters more powerful than him wouldn’t want to fight him. Alright, the opening ceremonies are about to begin, prepare to enter. Mubai, Tang San, the two of you lead everyone inside. I’ll leave first to see your heroic appearance from the stands.”

Before anyone had the chance to protest, this dean had already taken to his feet and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Sure enough, the tournament functionaries soon entered the rest area, organizing the now all present academies to enter the arena.

Making the Shrek Academy team somewhat pissed was that those functionaries apparently ignored their existence. One after another the other teams were sent into the arena, but they alone were forgotten. Only finally, when they were the only team remaining in the rest area, did a functionary walk over, taking them to the passage into the arena.

If it wasn’t for Tang San and Dai Mubai suppressing him, the fire choked back in Fatty’s belly would already have had signs of erupting.

Even though they were last to enter the arena, the instant they arrived they were still shocked by everything they saw.

Around the enormous wide open space were countless shouting and cheering spectators. Just ahead in the middle was a platform against a golden backdrop, and behind the platform were the remodelled VIP seats.

The diameter of the expansive space surpassed a hundred fifty meters, and in the center the academies that had already entered were arranged in neat formations. Each academy that entered was introduced by the master of ceremonies on the platform.

“Last to enter is the Shrek Academy team. Shrek Academy, originally Blue Tyrant Academy, changed its name to Shrek one year ago. Look, in the distinct exotic attire, altogether eleven competing students. Their sign up slogan is: Unchallenged champions. Truly a very expressive slogan, I hope they can make an outstanding display.”

Hearing the officiant's words, the spectators in the stands roared with laughter, heckling calls rising and falling in succession.

“Fuck, I can't stand it.”

As Dai Mubai walked forward he clenched his fists, and Tang San walking behind him could clearly sense how Dai Mubai's muscles tensed, about to erupt at any moment.

“Boss, patience. Wait until the matches. We'll shut them up with strength.”

Tang San clapped Dai Mubai's shoulder.

Dai Mubai turned to glance at Tang San, and with a deep breath he managed to calm himself. If it had only been him, he might have already erupted, but he knew that as team captain, if he couldn't control himself, how could he lead the team?

Finally all the teams had entered the arena, the Shrek Academy group stood furthest back.

Tang San didn't pay any attention to the jeers, and constantly observed their surroundings. This Great Spirit Arena was undoubtedly the biggest he had ever seen. Enough stands to hold eighty thousand spectators, backed with silver decorations. Even though it was morning, the specially suspended magic tool illumination didn't only seem lavish, but still gave a feeling of vast space.

As his gaze fell on the VIP platform, he unexpectedly saw a few acquaintances. One of them was the one who originally drove them away from Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, prince Xue Xing, and also Heaven Dou Imperial Academy's three committee members. They all sat in the second row of the VIP seats, and in the first row were only three people.

The man in the middle wore gold and red robes, on his head a brilliant gold crown, his face like an old moon, and though apparently a bit older than prince Xue Xing, they still resembled one another. The difference was, this man's bearing was far from what prince Xue Xing could compare to. Despite appearing a bit aged, sitting there straight backed he gave people a feeling of being central. As if everything in the surroundings centered on him.

Without need to ask, Tang San could guess this man's identity. If even prince Xue Xing sat in the second row, then the identity of this man in the first row was obvious; besides Heaven Dou Empire's emperor, who could sit in this seat? Sitting to his left was an old man even older than him. Dressed entirely in red robes, wearing a pentagonal platinum hat, both eyes small as if he was asleep, with slim shoulders and a slender build like a javelin.

The person on the emperor's right, Tang San wasn't just familiar with, but moreover knew well. Ning Rongrong's father, Seven Treasure Glazed Tile School's master, Ning Fengzhi.

Today Ning Fengzhi wore white robes, on his head the emblematic seven treasures purple and gold hat. As school master of one of the upper three sects of the seven great schools, he was perfectly entitled to sitting here. As for the red robed man on the other side, from the pentagonal platinum hat, Tang San could determine that this

was Spirit Hall's platinum bishop.

Spirit Hall's highest ruler was no doubt the Supreme Pontiff, and under the Supreme Pontiff were four archbishops, their identity symbolized by the pentagonal platinum hat. This person here was no doubt one of the platinum bishops. Able to qualify as platinum bishop, this person should be the hall master of Heaven Dou City's Spirit Temple.

At this moment, Ning Fengzhi apparently sensed Tang San looking at him. Gaze roaming, he just met Tang San's eyes, smiling faintly at him and nodding slightly.

Notes

1. (TL note: the wolf spirit power attacker)
2. (TL note: the bone spirit speed attacker)
3. (TL note: the healing staff spirit assist)
4. The ones they encountered when eating dinner at the hotel the day before entering the forest, with the Black Tortoise teacher.
5. (时年) "Time Year"
6. (残梦) Or "ruining/brutal" etc.

091 – Preselection First Match, Begins

Part 1

The officiant on the side of the VIP platform said in a clear voice:

“Next, please welcome his majesty, Heaven Dou Empire’s emperor, to declare this tournament open.”

Just like Tang San guessed, the person seated in the center of the VIP section’s first row, his majesty the Heaven Dou Empire’s emperor wearing gold and red robes, slowly stood amidst thunderous applause.

Raising his right hand to wave at the spectator seats as well as the competing Spirit Masters below, the applause quickly stopped, and the vast space became quiet.

A grave and clear voice transmitted to the entire audience via sound amplifying spirit tools,

“I, emperor of Heaven Dou Empire, Xue Ye^[1], represents Heaven Dou Empire, and also this time’s tournament host to declare, the Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament now open.”

Applause thundered once again, cheers rising and falling. But in the center of the arena, Tang San suddenly discovered that this emperor’s smiling expression was a bit forced, as if he himself wasn’t particularly excited for this tournament.

After waiting for this round of applause to die down once again, the emperor continued:

“Here, I hope, the Spirit Masters participating in this tournament, can amply display their strength, and obtain good records. You are all the pride of Heaven Dou Empire. For the sake of the Empire’s glory,

display your brilliance.”

Applause rose for a third time, and this time the eyes of the Spirit Masters in the center revealed a scorching brightness. To them, this tournament was the best stage to reveal themselves.

The emperor sat back in his seat, and the officiant’s voice rose once again,

“Next, please welcome the Seven Treasure Glazed Tile School’s school master, mister Ning Fengzhi, to address this time’s tournament.”

Along with Ning Fengzhi getting up, applause rose once again, and there were even more attentive gazes. Who didn’t want to take a look at the grace of the Spirit Master world’s number one Support Spirit Master.

Ning Fengzhi smiled slightly, holding both hands together,

“I’m very happy to be invited as an honored guest to this tournament opening. As school master of the Seven Treasure Glazed Tile School, I have already seen very many Spirit Masters grow. As the Continent’s noblest vocation, each Spirit Master must experience many things to grow. In my experience, a sword’s point comes from sharpening, and plum blossom fragrance follows bitter cold. The Spirit Masters joining this tournament are undoubtedly the elite of the young generation. Just as his majesty just said, I hope you can win honor for the Empire, and also for your own academies. The Empire needs your talent. Thank you.”

Listening to Ning Fengzhi’s address, the Heaven Dou emperor finally revealed a sincere smile.

The officiant said:

“School master Ning, you are the most formidable support system Spirit Master, so I represent the spectators of the battles this time to ask, among the twenty eight teams joining the Heaven Dou City district’s preselection competition, which one do you support?”

Ning Fengzhi still wore a slight smile,

“Besides Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s first team entering the finals as seeds, among these twenty eight teams, I still think highly of one other. I think that they possess not only the capability to pass the preselection tournament, but at the same time may very possibly obtain the final victory of this Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament.”

“Eh?”

The officiant said, astonished:

“May we know which team could gain school master Ning’s favor?”

Ning Fengzhi smiled mysteriously, saying:

“As for which academy this team belongs to, forgive me for holding back the climax. For the moment I can’t reveal it. But I believe, that the final champions of this tournament, will certainly belong to the Empire.”

Sitting next to emperor Xue Ye, the platinum bishop at this moment opened the eyes he had so far kept almost closed. His eyes appeared very turbid, without any luster, and his gaze fell on the twenty eight competing teams in the center of the arena, as if searching for the team Ning Fengzhi spoke of.

By now the spectators had already begun discussing, everyone speculating on which academy Ning Fengzhi supported. With a bit of thought it was clear that Ning Fengzhi wouldn’t be indicating Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s second team. Since their strength couldn’t compare to the first team, how could they be the final champions? But there were twenty eight teams in the preselection tournament, and in the end only five teams could remain, how would it be so easy to guess.

Ning Fengzhi sat back down, and the officiant smiling said:

“I regret that school master Ning won’t reveal the team he supports. Next, Heaven Dou City’s Spirit Temple hall master, Spirit Hall platinum bishop, lord Salas^[2], will conduct the preselection competition’s first round draw. Afterwards, Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s secondary team will fight their first drawn matchup. This

is also the only match today.”

Platinum bishop Salas slowly stood, and was led by a maid to the side of the officiant, starting to draw the lots. He was apparently very unwilling to speak, and each pair of opponents he drew was announced by the officiant.

“Preselection competition first round, Blue Sunshine Academy versus Purple Star Academy.”

“Preselection competition first round, Auckland Academy versus Blazing Radiance Academy.”

“Preselection competition first round, Heaven Dou Imperial Academy versus Shrek Academy.”

The Shrek Academy group didn’t pay much attention to the rest of the matchups. When they heard their first opponent would actually be Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s second team, everyone couldn’t help their expressions becoming grotesque.

Oscar muttered:

“Such an unlikely coincidence.”

Ma Hongjun squeezed his fingers, issuing bone popping noises,

“Excellent. They aren’t rushing us off. This time we’ll let them have a look at what’s called strength.”

Tang San and Dai Mubai smiled wryly. They were naturally looking forward to fighting Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, but becoming the focus of the tournament’s first day in their present attire, was really somewhat.....

Not just the Shrek Academy people were astonished, the audience was too. The other academies might not have paid attention, but the Shrek Academy was really too gaudy, how couldn’t they attract notice?

For a moment, jeers flowed continuously. Very many spectators were all shouting the word ‘fraud’, Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s second team was clearly looking for pushovers, and Shrek Academy

didn't seem like a Spirit Master team as much as a pack of clowns.

The lottery done, that platinum bishop Salas swept his gaze across everyone, indifferently saying:

"I^[3] drew the lots, and sensed no falsehood. I swear on the honor of Spirit Hall. At the same time, I hereby declare, of the participating Spirit Master academy students, Spirit Hall will make an exception for anyone capable of reaching the finals, letting them directly enter Spirit Temple."

These words weren't anything to the spectators, but the Spirit Masters were already in an uproar.

What kind of place was Spirit Temple? It was the highest place in Spirit Hall apart from Supreme Pontiff Palace and Douluo Palace, in the entire Continent only the two great imperial capitals had one each. Supreme Pontiff Palace was for the Supreme Pontiff's use, and Douluo Palace was a symbolic existence. Therefore, the Spirit Temples' position were in fact the highest ranked institutions in Spirit Hall. To a Spirit Master, being able to directly enter Spirit Temple could be a shortcut to improving his strength. Not only would he have the best treatment, but all kinds of cultivation aids as well as Spirit Temple's prestige, no part lacked extreme attraction to ordinary Spirit Masters.

Hearing the platinum bishop's words, emperor Xue Ye's expression clearly dropped. Ning Fengzhi on his side softly shook his head at the emperor, and emperor Xue Ye's complexion eased somewhat.

The people nearby were behind them and naturally didn't catch this little exchange, and the Spirit Masters below were very far away. But, this didn't escape Tang San's Purple Demon Eye. He clearly saw the subtleties within, and combined with what Grandmaster had once told him about some matters, Tang San understood that the conflict between Spirit Hall and the Empire was already growing deeper and deeper, almost to the degree where it couldn't be reconciled. Otherwise, that platinum bishop wouldn't dare recruit outstanding Spirit Masters right in front of this emperor.

"Good, then next we will conduct the first match of the first round of

the preselection competition, Heaven Dou Imperial Academy facing Shrek Academy. All competing academies leave the field. The two academies taking part in the match later please prepare. In one hour, the match will formally begin.”

“Third brother, let me go up.”

Fatty didn’t pay the slightest attention to those contemptuous expressions in their surroundings, and spoke to Tang San while rubbing his fists and wiping his palms^[4].

Tang San glared at him,

“We’ll follow the original plan. No need to argue.”

Tai Long laughed out loud and clapped Fatty’s shoulder,

“Junior, don’t worry. Later big brother will help you properly teach those Heaven Dou Imperial Academy fellows a lesson.”

Fatty deflated like a ball. If one described his current expression with two words, it would be ‘secret grudges’.

As a result of the other academies not competing today, after stepping off the field they directly left the rest area, guided by functionaries to specially prepared viewing platforms for competitors to watch the fights. Because the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy was the symbol of the Heaven Dou imperial family, they were naturally treated different from normal academies and didn’t rest here. Inside the vast rest area, very quickly remained only the Shrek Academy team.

Flender, Grandmaster, and Liu Erlong weren’t here. Clearly, this match was left in their control.

Dai Mubai lowered his voice:

“Little San, you plan it.”

Part 2

Tang San didn’t need to be urged, nodding:

“When we go up we’ll have Dai Mubai, Me, Xiao Wu, Jing Ling, Huang Yuan, Jian Zhu, Tai Long. We’ll attack according to the first plan. At that time we suffered that kind of humiliation at Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, even though it was caused by prince Xue Xing, the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy symbolizes the imperial family. Dean Flender and the other teachers aren’t here, but we understand what they think. If we want to have a good future, then today we must thoroughly smash our opponent. I think, to us, one minute should be enough.”

Tai Mubai’s tiger palms slapped together, the four pupils of his evil eyes glinting ominously,

“That’s right, we only need one minute.”

An incorporeal harsh atmosphere spread in Tang San and Dai Mubai’s hearts. The scene of that time they powerlessly withdrew from Heaven Dou Imperial Academy in front of Dugu Bo would never be erased from their minds. Even though Tang San didn’t say it clearly, everyone understood that they not only had to prevail over this Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team, they still had to keep them from passing this time’s qualifying competition.

Not long after, a special functionary arrived and hurried everyone to the stage. The organizers clearly weren’t optimistic about their chances, and they were even brought by just one functionary. Just as they were leaving the mouth of passage, the Shrek Academy group could already hear the officiant outside declaring the names and spirits of each member of the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy team. Golden beams of light shot down on the high stage from the side of the Great Spirit Arena, accompanying each member of the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team as they appeared.

Before speaking of strength, the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy members were excellent in terms of appearance, the faintly golden uniforms had the words ‘Heaven Dou’ embroidered on the left side of the chest, and on the back was a design of seven silver stars, the symbol of Heaven Dou Imperial Academy. Each one was valiant and formidable-looking, all appearing over twenty years old. Under the illumination of those spirit tools, even though it was daytime, they still

seemed to release a dazzling radiance, just like little golden suns, attracting the audiences attention.

“Fuck, they’re clearly taking us as extras, setting off this kind of fireworks.”

Huang Yuan said angrily. Even though this Lone Wolf Spirit Master’s stature wasn’t as doughty as Tai Long, he was still fairly robust. Like Dai Mubai he was also a power attack system Spirit Master. Because of his straightforward nature, he was very quickly accepted by the Shrek Seven Devils.

To the side, Jing Ling uneasily said:

“Wrong. We’re not extras, but considered cow dung. Fresh flowers stuck on top of manure, isn’t that even more dazzling?”

Contrary to Lone Wolf, his appearance was somewhat wretched. The slender agility attack system Spirit Master gave a somewhat feminine impression. Together with him, most people would feel uneasy. His cold gaze at people was like a poisonous snake, and even when everyone were exchanging pointers, he would never let himself be in a disadvantageous position. He would frequently team up to attack, but when defending there would rarely be a trace of him. He was called a coward by the ferocious male students Dai Mubai, Huang Yuan, and Tai Long, but fortunately, this fellow only had a somewhat strange character, and his strength was still fairly outstanding.

“We’ll let them know who is manure.”

Tai Long resolutely waved his fist.

Dai Mubai coldly said:

“Let’s go. It’s our turn to go up.”

The lights in the arena faded, and the Shrek Academy competing students slowly went on stage amidst loud hissing voices.

In the arena there had already occurred a change. In just that brief half hour, a long ago prepared stage had been constructed. The

stage was ten meters tall and circular, with a diameter of thirty meters, a fairly large area. Of course, this was still only one stage. Once the preselection competition truly started tomorrow, there would be five stages here simultaneously. The twenty eight teams would conduct twenty seven rounds of the preselection competition, each team confronting twenty seven opponents. The victors would obtain one point, the defeated none. After twenty seven rounds, the five teams with the most points would advance to the promotion competition. And entering the promotion competition was equal to entering the finals. This month long qualifying competition was equal to a trial for each of the academy teams. Twenty seven days of continuous matches was enough for teams that lacked endurance to collapse.

In the entire Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament, this preselection competition would occupy the first half of the time. The finals after the promotion competition would take place on the common border of the Heaven Dou Empire and Star Luo Empire, in the public plaza in front of the Supreme Pontiff Palace. The final champions would be issued the award by the Supreme Pontiff personally, an immense honor.

It truly was a difference in treatment. Tang San squinted slightly, the expression on his face still serene. Together with Dai Mubai, they brought the Shrek Academy's altogether eleven members into a line in the center of the stage, standing opposite to the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team's members.

This Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team had altogether sixteen members. At that time the Shrek Academy only stayed at the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy for a very short time, and these people naturally didn't recognize Tang San and the others. These aristocratic children naturally looked even more at the Shrek Academy members' attire. If this hadn't been on stage, some of them might have already burst out laughing.

"Truly a group of toads. This type also participates in the Spirit Master Tournament?"

Standing furthest ahead in the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy

second team was a petite male student. His skin was fair, and his long hair also very beautiful, seemingly like a girl. Even his voice was soft and feminine.

“Captain, why would we draw an opponent like this. Toads on your foot really won’t bite people, but are still disgusting^[5]. Look at those uniforms, I’ll die laughing.”

A gorgeously dressed female student with ample chest next to the petite man covered her mouth as she spoke. That gesture was apparently for fear of smelling the Shrek Academy students.

That captain nodded consideringly, his gaze somewhat lecherously floating over to Xiao Wu,

“It’s only a pity on such a little beauty.”

Xiao Wu snorted coldly,

“A hermaphrodite and a prostitute, how did we draw an opponent like this.”

“Little slut, who are you calling a prostitute?”

That hot bodied female student immediately flipped out. That male student addressed as a hermaphrodite also immediately went ashen.

Dai Mubai laughed out loud,

“Xiao Wu, you’re too talented. Why didn’t I think of such a good description? Hermaphrodite and prostitute. Really a perfect match!”

The Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team’s petite captain coldly said:

“Fine, you’re very good. Even if the competition prohibits killing opponents, injuries really are hard to avoid. Since you’re courting death, don’t blame us.”

The competition still hadn’t started, but both sides already stood with swords drawn and bows bent, the taste of gunpowder thick and clear.

Dai Mubai clearly didn't like having his own lines snatched by the other side, but now the referee had already walked over.

"Both sides salute, non competitors withdraw from the stage."

Whether it was Heaven Dou Imperial Academy or Shrek Academy, both sides unwillingly forced themselves to bow in salute to their counterparts. The superfluous withdrew from the stage, only leaving seven people each to participate in this first match.

On the Shrek Academy's side, Dai Mubai, Tai Long, and Huang Yuan stood furthest in front. Tang San was in the center, with Xiao Wu and Jung Ling on either side. Jiang Zhu stood furthest back.

On the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy side, besides the man and woman who spoke up before, the remaining five were all robust people, standing in a line in front, obstructing the two behind them like a wall. That petite captain stood in the center, doubtlessly this side's control system Spirit Master. And that fiery bodied young woman stood in the rear.

In the VIP section.

Emperor Xue Ye looked at the stage with a smile, asking Ning Fengzhi at his side:

"School master Ning, It seems this first match doesn't hold any suspense!"

Ning Fengzhi smiled slightly, nodding, expressing agreement.

The platinum bishop Salas on the other side suddenly said:

"School master Ning, could you tell me which of the twenty eight teams you before said could be championship contestants?"

Ning Fengzhi smiled:

"Your grace, is a bit of mystery no good? I think you also certainly have teams to support."

Salas tightlipped said:

"Since you say this, school master Ning, are you unwilling to reveal

it?”

Ning Fengzhi smiled calmly, saying:

“This is a school secret, it appears unrelated to your grace.”

“You.....”

Salas’ complexion clearly dropped. His gaze colliding with Ning Fengzhi’s in front of emperor Xue Ye, neither yielding the slightest bit.

Emperor Xue Ye sitting in the middle frowned minutely, mediating:

“No need to be impatient, after this tournament ends, we will naturally have the results. Bishop Salas, what school master Ning said wasn’t wrong, who he favors is his own matter. You see, I also didn’t ask about it. Even though I’m also very curious.”

Platinum bishop Salas glanced at emperor Xue Ye, indifferently saying:

“As your majesty says. Then let us look at the match.”

Prince Xue Xing in the second row proudly said to everyone next to him:

“Look, his majesty and school master Ning have both already noticed that this match is without any suspense. Our Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s students truly are elite. This is still only the second team. This time our main team only has one goal: final champions.”

Part 3

He was the person in charge of Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, and if they could obtain a good record, his reputation would naturally shine. He had already forgotten the words ‘Shrek Academy’. As an imperial prince, what happened that time at Heaven Dou Imperial Academy was to him only a tiny interlude.

“I think maybe not. School master Ning only agreed with his majesty that the match didn’t hold any suspense. He didn’t say who would

win.”

Hearing this dissenting voice, prince Xue Xing immediately turned in its direction with annoyance. The speaker was no stranger, but rather the head of the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy board of education, Spirit Douluo Meng Shen Ji.

Prince Xue Xing coldly said:

“Board member Meng Shen Ji, don’t enhance the power of others when you’re directly in charge of the Academy.”

He and Meng Shen Ji had never gotten along, only both sides were unable to sway the other’s position. Because of the matter with Shrek Academy last time, Meng Shen Ji had once gone to find emperor Xue Ye to lodge a complaint, but the emperor was busy with official business, and his health wasn’t too well. He also didn’t particularly pay attention. Prince Xue Xing was his only little brother, and he still had faith in his brother.

Prince Xue Xing didn’t see who the competing Shrek Academy members were, but how could Meng Shen Ji fail to notice? At a glance he recognized the one who had originally left him with a profound impression, Tang San. When he saw that Shrek Academy largely hadn’t brought out the Shrek Seven Devils, inwardly he couldn’t help feeling sorrowful. The magnificent Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, unexpectedly couldn’t make the opponent go all out. But what could he do? Practically each student at the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy had some background, and he couldn’t reorganize even if he wanted to.

With formidable teachers and material conditions, yet rarely produced outstanding disciples. Were it not for receiving the grace of the imperial family, he would have long ago already left this board member position.

“The qualifying competition’s first round, first match, formally starts.”

The referee’s announcement declared the official start of the first round of the qualifying competition of the current Continental Advanced Spirit Master Academy Elite Tournament.

Similar to the spirit arena, the tournament gave one minute for both sides to deploy their spirits.

While coldly gazing at the other side, Dai Mubai raised his hands to his chest, shouting,

“Brothers, release spirits! White Tiger Body Enhancement.”

As both sides released their spirits, all the spirit rings that appeared made surprised voices immediately spread through the spectator seats.

Two yellow and two purple, four dazzlingly beautiful spirit rings flashed around Dai Mubai. Tai Long and Huang Yuan at his side both released two yellow and one purple spirit ring. The valiant aura released by the three power attack system Spirit Masters unexpectedly wasn't inferior in any respect when facing off against the five opposing people.

Xiao Wu, Jing Ling as well as Jiang Zhu behind, also each released two yellow and one purple spirit ring. None of these six lacked an optimal spirit ring configuration.

But what startled the audience the most, and even caused shock, was the person in the central position of the Shrek Academy's formation, Tang San. Two yellow, one purple and one black, four spirit rings simultaneously appeared around him.

Black, originally the most inconspicuous of colors, but, people with the slightest bit of knowledge about Spirit Masters all understood what that signified.

Not just the spectator seats, even the VIP section now cried out in alarmed surprise. Who could have imagined that in the first round of the preselection competition, they would actually see a ten thousand year spirit ring appear on stage.

Prince Xue Xing, unable to control his emotions, shouted:

“No. This is impossible. How can it be a ten thousand year spirit ring?”

Meng Shen Ji painfully closed his eyes,

“This should originally have been the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy’s glory. No wonder. No wonder they didn’t even field their full strength.”

Even Seven Treasure Glazed Tile school master Ning Fengzhi who had already had a very favorable opinion about Shrek Academy was gobsmacked when he saw the black spirit ring around Tang San. The fourth spirit ring already reached ten thousand years? As school master of one of the seven great schools’ three upper sects, how couldn’t he understand the problem within? That was a spirit beast with a five thousand year cultivation gap!

Platinum bishop Salas’ previously squinting eyes now abruptly shone, staring fixedly at Tang San. Even if he didn’t forget his manners like prince Xue Xing behind him, the hands resting on his knees unconsciously tightened.

“Ten thousand year fourth ring?”

Light flashed in emperor Xue Ye’s eyes, a dazzling luster flitting past the corners of his eyes,

“School master Ning, it seems, this should be the team you were optimistic about?”

Ning Fengzhi’s expression had already recovered to normal after the brief shock. Despite the raging storm Tang San’s ten thousand year fourth ring raised in his heart, at this moment he could still maintain a calm attitude. Calmly smiling, he said:

“Your majesty, my daughter is also a student at this Shrek Academy, she just didn’t appear in this match.”

“Eh? In other words, this Shrek Academy is fostered by your honorable school?”

Emperor Xue Ye said with a smile. His eyes clearly displayed a cheerful look, without any worry about the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team running into such a formidable opponent. But the expression of platinum bishop Salas on the other side clearly

grew more unsightly. Ning Fengzhi declaring that his daughter was part of this team, was clearly to tell him that Spirit Hall mustn't have the notion of striking at this team. And the Seven Treasure Glazed Tile School had also always had a good relationship with the Heaven Dou imperial family.

Ning Fengzhi smiled slightly, saying:

"I also can't say it's raised by our Seven Treasure Glazed Tile School, it's just that the child with the ten thousand year fourth spirit ring is also a disciple of our upper three sects, that's all. Originally, they were going to join Heaven Dou Imperial Academy, but unfortunately they were turned back by his highness prince Xue Xing. Afterwards they joined another academy in Heaven Dou City, the forerunner of the present Shrek Academy, Blue Tyrant Academy.

"What?"

Emperor Xue Ye was inwardly alarmed, only with difficulty restraining himself from turning around and questioning prince Xue Xing. But in his mind he still immediately recalled the complaint Meng Shen Ji had lodged with him, and his brows drew down.

After hearing Ning Fengzhi say this, Salas' expression recovered somewhat, and there was even a light of taking joy in calamity in his eyes.

Compared to the Shrek Academy side, the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team's spirit rings were inferior, they didn't lack in quality; being able to represent Heaven Dou Imperial Academy in battle, these students also all had optimal spirit rings. After all, relying on the strength of Heaven Dou Imperial Academy's formidable teachers, as well as the power of nobility, getting hold of optimal spirit rings wasn't too strenuous. Unfortunately, right now the seven people on stage didn't have one Spirit Master at the fortieth rank, and all had three spirit rings. As they saw Tang San, and his muted black ten thousand year spirit ring, they couldn't keep their pupils from contracting, dully.

But this was a match, equivalent to a battlefield, and daydreaming on the battlefield was a major taboo. The opponents might stare

blankly, but the Shrek group wouldn't. In combat experience, this Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team in front of them couldn't even compare to Tai Long and the other Shrek latecomers, let alone the Shrek Seven Devils.

“Blitz——”

Tang San shouted loudly. While the opponents were still lifeless, the Shrek seven already initiated their attack.

Dai Mubai took the lead, his muscles swelling suddenly as he lead Tai Long and Huang Yuan in a forward charge. Xiao Wu and Jing Ling also simultaneously went out on the flanks. Jiang Zhu behind Tang San now held a fantastic scepter in her hand, the scepter tapered on the lower end, growing thick and heavy at the top, carved with exotic inscriptions. Right now the third spirit ring around her flashed, and with a wave of her hand, the scepter stuck into the surface of the floor, a ring of saffron light quietly spreading out. Only once Dai Mubai's trio charged did the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team members react, that petite male control system Spirit Master angrily shouting:

“What are you staring at, fight!”

The five people in front of the Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team were without exception power attack system Spirit Masters, their spirits were each: Lion, Bear, Tiger, Leopard, Wolf. The impact force of this assembly was clearly unusually powerful. Even if they reacted a beat slow, on hearing the petite man's shout they acted immediately, fiercely going to meet Dai Mubai's trio. It seemed to them that even though Dai Mubai's spirit was over the fortieth rank, they still held the numerical advantage. Their five spirits had all reached the thirty fifth rank or higher, and coming into contact with the opposing three they weren't at a disadvantage. As long as they first defeated the opponents' three main attackers, victory wasn't far away.

The Heaven Dou Imperial Academy second team's five front power attack system Spirit Master clearly had the right idea. Their goal was to take the first take the initiative in the early stage as both sides just came into contact.

Unfortunately, they came into contact with Dai Mubai. Dai Mubai whose spirit power had already reached the forty fourth rank. And still the pressure behind him, the Thousand Hands Asura with the ten thousand year spirit ring.

The Evil White Tiger faced upwards and roared, and the instant both sides were about to engage, without holding back he immediately opened with his third spirit ring ability, White Tiger Vajra Transformation.

Tai Long was even simpler, his three spirit rings launching simultaneously, immediately changing into a ruthless orangutan with his pure strength amplification.

Huang Yuan's third spirit ring ability was somewhat similar to Dai Mubai's, the boost was just a bit inferior. Called Sky Wolf Transformation, it instantly gave him a fifty percent attack power and speed boost.

The Shrek Academy's three power attack system Spirit Master actually all opened with their thousand year spirit abilities, this was something nobody had expected. After all, when opening with spirit abilities that had such a large consumption, if the opponent blocked them, they wouldn't be able to follow up.

But, did Shrek's team members need to follow up?

Black light floated around Tang San, he didn't even give the opponents' control system Spirit Master the chance to act, before his ten thousand year spirit ring ability Blue Silver Prison had already launched.

Without any warning, more than a hundred strands of black Blue Silver Grass suddenly rushed out of the ground, becoming seven solid cages, completely trapping Heaven Dou Imperial Academy's seven within.

Cries of alarm resounded in the whole arena, some spectating Spirit Masters shouting the words 'crowd control'. Crowd control, a control system Spirit Master's most menacing tool in battle, appeared in this first round of the qualifying competition.

Notes

1. (雪夜) "Snow Night"
2. (salasi 萨拉斯)
3. He refers to himself as (本座), an uncommon personal pronoun that in fantasy fiction might be used by someone of great magical power, or perhaps someone with a very senior position in an organisation.
4. Idiom: Preparing to fight. Probably also used literally here.
5. Idiomatic expression. Toads won't bite, but they'll still be intimidating when they crawl over your feet.

Credits

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